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THE INDYPENDENT
#301 FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026

DAVID HOLLENBACH

NYC PREPARES FOR ICE

NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED MUTUAL AID GROUPS ARE MOBILIZING AGAINST TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION GOONS

BY NANCY HOCH — PAGE 12

THE INDYPENDENT

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE HABITS OF A FREE PEOPLE

Like millions of Americans, Nancy Hoch experienced the first year of the Trump administration as a slow-moving horror movie that left her anxious and exhausted. In mid-November, she attended a training session with people who wanted to learn more about how they could assist immigrant communities targeted by ICE, the paramilitary, secret police force that has moved to the center of Donald Trump's second presidency. In her beautiful cover story (P12) about her journey into a New York City's burgeoning nonviolent resistance movement to ICE, Hoch writes about how she discovered two things she hadn't anticipated — the enormous feeling of relief of being in community with other caring, like-minded people who had each other's backs and her own growing feeling of bravery from having moved from fear to taking action.

In her first-person report (P16) from Minneapolis, longtime Twin Cities resident Cara Letofsky describes an urban war zone. Locals continue to non-violently oppose thousands of marauding federal agents who have tried to terrorize their community into submission and have instead created a grave political crisis for Trump as his poll numbers continue plummeting and the midterms loom on the horizon.

This quiet, unblinking courage of ordinary people doing extraordinary things can be found throughout this issue. In addition to mutual aid organizers protecting their immigrant neighbors, we have nurses (P4) walking the picket line in the dead of winter, NYCHA residents standing up to public housing privatizers (P6) and young socialists (P9) knocking on their neighbors' doors and inviting them to have conversations about breaking with the failed party machines of the past in favor of something better.

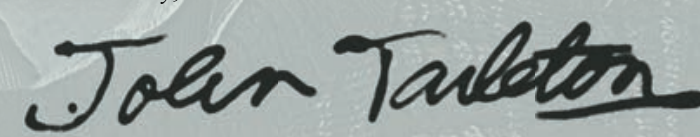
We're going to need all that courage and public spiritedness and then some in the months ahead. We are in a volatile, see-saw moment in which an authoritarian regime is trying to consolidate its power and crush all dissent, but has only partially succeeded. This country, with all its flaws and contradictions, was founded 250 years ago out of a rebellion against an autocratic king by people who insisted on speaking their mind and not being pushed around. That same rebellious spirit would later help fuel the abolitionist movement against slavery, the women suffragists who insisted on the right to vote, the great factory strikes of the 1930s that birthed the modern labor movement and the civil rights struggles of the 1960s that gave us a more inclusive society. And now we see a surging opposition to Trump and his authoritarian MAGA movement. The habits and beliefs of a people accustomed to having lived in a democratic republic are not easily vanquished, as Machiavelli noted 500 years ago in The Prince.

Meanwhile, despite their patriotic pretensions, Trump and MAGA are deeply hostile to everything and everyone that has made this country good and decent. The forever wars of the 2000s and 2010s have come home. For our government, the "enemy" is now the American people, or at least the majority of the population that lives in urban centers, college towns and anywhere else where inclusive, cosmopolitan values are commonplace. For them, it's a war without end and rounding up the "worst of the worst" immigrants is just the pretext.

How this struggle between white nationalist authoritarianism and multi-racial democracy turns out is still up for grabs. MAGA has the guns and state power. We have the people and the resolve – think of Renee Good and Alex Pretti calmly facing down their killers in their final moments — that comes from refusing to live in the dystopia they would impose on us. When one falls many more have stepped forward.

Amid the darkness, we are finding something within ourselves that is giving us the fortitude to push through the current nightmare. It will also give us the clarity to create a more just and compassionate world when we get to the other side. Here at The Indy *we look forward to continuing to cover this struggle as it unfolds. To do that, we need your help. Please see the fund drive update below and do what you can to pitch in if you have not already done so.*

In Solidarity,



John Tarleton
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
The Indypendent

THE INDY ON THIN ICE

Many thanks to the 274 supporters who have donated $31,226 so far during our winter fund drive. We are now more than 60% of the way to reaching our fund drive goal of $50,000. However, we still have a ways to go. If you like what you see in this paper and have not donated so far, please consider doing so today. If we don't reach our goal, THE INDY will be skating on thin ice by later this spring. You can give by going to indypendent.org/donate, by sending a check or money order to The Indypendent/388 Atlantic Ave./Brooklyn, NY 11217 or by using the Venmo code on this page.

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HOCHUL DUCKS NURSES STRIKE, WHILE ALLIES CASH HOSPITAL INDUSTRY CHECKS

CHASE KIHN

ONE DAY LONGER: *Striking nurses rally outside Gov. Kathy Hochul's Midtown office on February 2.*

By Theodore Hamm

Unlike Mayor Zohran Mamdani, Governor Hochul has remained far away from the frontlines of the nurses strike. Since day one, she has tweeted far more times about her beloved Buffalo Bills. Her tepid calls for negotiations show far less passion.

Ideologically, Hochul is not troubled by the enormous salary disparities between nurses and hospital CEOs. As Bernie Sanders highlighted at a January 20 rally, the CEOs of the three hospital networks facing strikes make an average of $16 million per year. Despite the 1%'s upcoming windfall from Trump tax cuts, the governor is nonetheless resisting Mamdani and the NYC-DSA's demand to share the wealth. When crowds chant "Tax the rich!" she hears "Let's go Bills."

Hochul's position on the strike also may be influenced by practical considerations. The Greater New York Hospital Association is a historically large donor to the state Democratic Party. In 2025, GNYHA dropped over $2 million into Dem campaign coffers.

Of that amount, $1.5 million went to the party's "housekeeping" account, or general fund which is essentially controlled by Hochul. That donation provided about one-third of the account's total haul for the year. The Democrats' Senate and Assembly housekeeping entities received $250,000 apiece. The Brooklyn and Bronx county organizations reeled in far more modest sums. Meanwhile, state Republican accounts collected $150,000 from GNYHA in 2025.

The expenditures from the Democrats' general fund in 2025 went to a party account handling federal races as well as to local county committees. The assembly intake from GNYHA was a small fraction of their account's total haul of $3.6 million, most of which came from unions and industry groups. That entity's expenditures went primarily to networking events.

Brooklyn assemblywoman Phara Souffrant Forrest, a former member of the New York State Nurses Association, says that Hochul first revealed her hand in the current conflict when she issued an executive order prior to the strike that made it easier for the hospitals to maintain staffing during the walkout. In addition, the NYC-DSA-backed legislator observes that Hochul "has not been on the picket line, which is a clear sign that she does not stand with nurses."

GNYHA was one of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's most powerful allies during his decade in office. The group even took credit for the governor's controversial liability waiver for nursing homes during the pandemic. When nearly all his key supporters called for Cuomo to resign during the sexual harassment scandal in 2021, GNYHA stood by their man.

By not using her leverage to end the strike, Hochul, like Cuomo, is playing ball with the hospital execs. The governor's office did not respond to the *Indypendent's* request for comment.

AI IN THE HOSPITAL

STRIKING NURSES GRAPPLE WITH A FAST-ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY

GARY MARTIN

By Elsie Carson-Holt

Thousands of New York City nurses spent weeks on the picket line this winter, demanding increased nurse-to-patient ratios and better safety protections in the largest nurses strike in the city's history.

But one overlooked part of their demands is guidelines around artificial intelligence in medical settings. That's one of the biggest technological developments and debates of the 21st century, once again raising the question, "what place does artificial intelligence have in a hospital?"

The answer is wide-ranging and changing every day. Doctors have already begun to use voice-transcription technology to cut down note-taking time, carry out administrative tasks, and use predictive models to look at possible patient health trajectories. A University of Minnesota study published in January 2025 found that 65% of hospitals already use AI-based tools. The number is likely higher today.

Some hospitals are already using it as a diagnostic aid. But one well-publicized study showed that gastroenterologists in Poland got 20% worse at spotting polyps and other abnormalities on their own during colonoscopies, after they'd grown accustomed to using an AI-assisted system.

In rare-disease research, however, AI programs are making it easier for doctors to diagnose and treat patients with rare diseases, which you can often find in flashy magazine features and headlines. A New York magazine story published in January profiled a seriously ill infant with a rare genetic disease who was able to be treated effectively, thanks to an AI tool called BabyFORce, which looked at the gene causing the disease and whether its activity needed to be increased or decreased. "Some scientists posit that advances in AI platforms could lead to progress for all 10,000 [known rare diseases] at once," the story reported. In a similar vein, the New Yorker asked last July "Can A.I. Find Cures for Untreatable Diseases—Using Drugs We Already Have?"

Most patients and health-care workers will never need to use life-saving AI tools such as BabyFORce. Instead, they experience the use of AI in more subtle, everyday ways, that are nevertheless completely reshaping the health-care experience.

Allison Pugh, a sociologist at John Hopkins University and author of The Last Human Job, is concerned about what is lost when AI streamlines tasks: It saves time, but in the process cuts out human-to-human contact. In her work, Pugh coined the term "connective labor," as a way to describe "the collaborative work of emotional recognition" that is so important in caregiving professions, such as health care and education, that AI can diminish.

"Health care is so much more than downloading information," she said. "If you want patients to hear you or to comply with treatment, they need to feel that you see them, and that's an interactive process that practitioners get good at because they have to, under extraordinary circumstances. Health-care practitioners rely on connection with human beings, with their patients for a lot of the success of their efforts."

"Without connective labor, health care will not work," she avers. "Patients will suffer."

A NURSE'S PERSPECTIVE

Maggie Latona, a striking nurse at Mount Sinai Hospital, also worries about losing connective labor. She feels that Mount Sinai and the other hospitals involved in the strike (which continues as we go to press) won't make strong commitments that AI will not be used to either replace her job or override nursing judgment,

"We're not saying you can't use some of these predictive models, but they're saying 'we can't guarantee your job at the bedside, because we might be able to replace it with some sort of algorithm,'" Latona told *The Indypendent*.

She says that AI is suited to some repetitive tasks, but "it is not going to be able to assuage [patients'] fears, right? It is not able to tell patients 'These are things that we've actually seen happen, this is how we deal with them, and this is what our patients go through.'"

Latona also fears that AI may be used to surveil nurses, even if that is not its purpose. Citing Mount Sinai's "incredibly punitive culture around nurses," and particularly the hospital's firing of three labor and delivery nurses on the eve of the strike.

"If AI is able to track our charting, how much of its efforts are going to be spent tracking how long are we charting, why are we taking this long?" She said. "My fear is that this would become 'why are you spending so much or so little time charting?' Or 'why are you spending so much time or so little time charting instead of being with the patient, or instead of making sure your documentation is correct and would hold up in court.'"

Latona and Pugh both worry that even if AI is able to cut down the amount of time spent on repetitive, administrative tasks, it may not necessarily increase time spent at patients' bedsides.

"I have a lot of sympathy for the health-care practitioners in this particular moment, because they are being compressed on both sides and then offered this technological solution," said Pugh. She cited an AI tool called Scribe that summarizes patient-provider conversations, and thus reduces time spent on data entry.

"I've talked to administrators, and they're like, 'Well, if we save an hour, I'll let the physician or the health-care practitioner have 20 minutes of that, but I'm going to put more patients in there and take 40," Pugh said. She believes that at this moment, practitioners are gaining more time from the tool, but predicts that will disappear within two years.

"We do a lot of charting, and it's very time-consuming," Latona said. "But if AI is saving, say, an hour per shift on charting, then that gives you another hour for another patient. It's still pulling me in so many different directions, even if I'm not sitting in front of a computer. An extra hour doesn't mean that I have the time to be able to safely care for yet another patient who needs far more time than what I would be spending at a computer."

AI has not just stayed within the confines of hospitals or doctors' offices. It has affected all kinds of medical fields.

Dr. R, a psychiatrist who practices at a hospital in New York City and wished to speak anonymously, says he has serious concerns about how AI, particularly chatbots, is affecting people's mental health.

He limits his use of AI, to instances such as using a chatbot that only draws from evidence-based literature to assist with research. He is extremely wary of the idea that chatbots, particularly in their current form, could be used as mental-health treatment. He says they can, in fact, make people's mental health worse.

HOW IMPORTANT IS HUMAN CONNECTION?

Continued on page 19

NYCHA RESISTERS TARGETED

RESIDENTS AT CHELSEA NYCHA BUILDING DIG IN AGAINST DEMOLITION PLAN

ELLA SPITZ

DETERMINED TO STAY: *The New York City Housing Authority wants Jonathan Santiago and his family out of the apartment that has been the family's home for four generations. NYCHA plans to demolish the building they live in and turn the land over to private developers.*

By Ella Spitz

The New York City Housing Authority wants Jonathan Santiago and his family out of the apartment that has been the family's home for four generations. It's one of the six units still occupied by tenants in Fulton 11, a building at 401 and 419 West 19th St. that NYCHA wants to demolish as the first step of a privatization scheme.

NYCHA announced in June 2023 that it planned to lease the land under the Fulton and the Elliot-Chelsea Houses (FEC)—on two separate sites between West 16th Street and West 27th Drive, between Ninth and Tenth avenues—to The Related Companies and Essence Realty, through the city's PACT (Permanent Affordability Commitment Together) program. The developers would gradually tear down the public-housing buildings, which hold 2,056 apartments, and move their residents to new buildings in the federal Section 8 program as they are completed. It would also construct about 2,500 luxury and about 1,000 so-called "affordable" apartments on the same land.

Fulton 11 and the Chelsea Addition senior housing are the first two buildings scheduled to be demolished. Before then, NYCHA needs to complete "Phase 0": the relocation of the 132 households in those buildings, 6% of the FEC developments' residents. They would move to "comparable" temporary apartments during the demolition and construction, and move again to new apartments.

The plan would privatize the buildings' management, moving them from Section 9, federal law covering traditional public housing, to Section 8, in which the government pays the landlord the difference between 30% of the tenant's income and an amount slightly below the median market rent in the area—well over $3,000 a month in Chelsea.

NYCHA and Housing Opportunities Unlimited (HOU), a Boston-based tenant-relocation company, have been pressuring tenants to relocate since last July, when Fulton 11 and Chelsea Addition residents received notices that they would have to move within 90 days.

DISPLACING TENANTS

Since then, 30 of the 36 units in Fulton 11 have been vacated. Renee Keitt, the Elliot-Chelsea Tenants' Association president, estimates 20 out of the 96 units in Chelsea Addition are still occupied. NYCHA has been concentrating its pressure on the remaining Fulton 11 tenants, she said.

"THEY TURNED A LOT OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS AGAINST EACH OTHER. THAT'S SOMETHING WE CAN NEVER GET BACK."

"Everybody grew up together. Kids have known each other since diapers," Santiago said. "They turned a lot of family and friends against each other. That's something we can never get back."

Santiago said they have faced indirect harassment. He said NYCHA nailed shut the garbage chute, claiming it was for maintenance; locked the playground and basketball courts for Fulton 11; and that cleaning staff they used to see daily stopped coming.

The heat and hot water in the building have been on and off since late August, he added, and over the holidays there was none at all. Santiago said he and the other tenants put in maintenance tickets for these issues, but nothing was resolved. It wasn't until he went in person to the NYCHA office and confronted them that the chute and parks reopened, and they got back heat and hot water.

"We slept with sweatpants, sweaters, jackets, hats. With the windows closed, it felt like we were sleeping outside," Santiago said.

His car was the last one in the parking lot next to the building, and he said HOU forced him to move it three blocks away. He said his mother, who is 61 and has lupus, used to use it to get to work, but the longer walk to the car is too painful, so she takes the bus.

Fulton 11 tenants have also complained of direct harassment from HOU employees and their own tenant association president, Miguel Acevedo.

Santiago said in December, Acevedo was waiting for his mother at the bus stop at 5:30 a.m., and rode the bus to work with her. Santiago said he threatened that if she didn't move NYCHA would evict her. Thomas Hillgardner, one of the lawyers representing FEC tenants, said what Acevedo did constitutes the lowest-level offense of criminal stalking.

Jeffrey Vanderhorst, 43, who has lived in Fulton 11 for almost 30 years, is also resisting relocation. He said HOU employees call his cellphone repeatedly, knock on his door, and wait in the building for him and his family.

"Related [Companies] has HOU doing their dirty

Continued on page 19

NYC BRIEFS

BY INDYPENDENT STAFF

DAVID HOLLENBACH

PINNACLE PURCHASER PROMISES REPAIRS

Rejecting opposition from tenants and Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration, a federal bankruptcy judge ruled Jan. 16 that the Pinnacle Group could sell a portfolio of 5,200 apartments to Summit Properties for $451 million. Judge David Jones said he was satisfied that Summit "has described a serious and reasonable sounding plan to rectify violations." It agreed to correct the most serious violations in the buildings within two months after the deal is closed, and to fix the rest within six months. Deputy Mayor Leila Bozorg said it had promised to spend $30 million on repairs. But Matt Talubas, a Pinnacle tenant from Northern Manhattan, told City Limits that residents had hoped for "some explicit instructions that they would be beholden to." Pinnacle exemplified the predatory business model of the early 21st century, of buying buildings with the intent to drive out rent-stabilized tenants and jack up rents. But after the rent-law reforms of 2019 sharply restricted increases on vacant units, it reverted to being an old-fashioned slumlord: The number of "immediately hazardous" violations it was cited for quadrupled over the next five years.

NEW LAWS PROTECT DELIVERISTAS

A new city law barring app-delivery companies from firing deliveristas without good cause will go into effect in January 2027. Workers Justice Project director Ligia Guallapa told the Indypendent News Hour on Jan. 27 that the group would urge the Mamdani administration to fund enforcement adequately and to stop having police issue criminal summonses for speeding on their motorized bicycles, which exposes the overwhelmingly immigrant deliveristas to deportation. The companies' algorithms are used "to punish workers when they're not speeding fast enough," she said. Meanwhile, the city Department of Consumer and Worker Protection announced Jan. 30 that it had reached a settlement in which UberEats and the Asian companies HungryPanda and Fantuan agreed to pay $4.6 million to workers who they had unfairly deactivated or paid less than the minimum wage for deliveristas. New laws raising that minimum to $21.44 an hour, extending it to grocery-delivery apps, and requiring an option to tip went into effect Jan. 26. The DCWP also filed a suit Jan. 15 seeking to shut down the Motoclick delivery app, accusing it of cheating workers by deducting the cost of refunded orders from their pay.

CITY OFFERS FREE TAX PREPARATION

A year after the Trump administration cancelled the Biden-era Direct File program, Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced the return of the city's free tax-return preparation. Individuals or couples without dependents who live or work in New York City are eligible if they made $68,000 or less last year, and families if they made $97,000 or less. The services are available either online or in-person at more than 140 locations, including NYC Health + Hospitals and MetroPlusHealth sites, with some in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Urdu. It also offers help for self-employed filers such as gig workers, freelancers, and small-business owners. To find sites, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/TaxPrep. The administration is also vowing to go after tax-prep companies that use deceptive practices, such as hidden fees or refund-anticipation loan scams.

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CITY GOVERNMENT

READY ON DAY 1

MAMDANI'S FIRST MONTH AS MAYOR SHOWS HE CAN HANDLE THE JOB

ROMAN BROSZKOWSKI

STILL WINNING: *Zohran Mamdani celebrates the Feb. 3 special election victory of his socialist ally Diana Moreno who won his old State Assembly seat in Astoria, Queens.*

By Theodore Hamm

Wednesday, February 4 marked the 13th time in 2026 that Mayor Mamdani's name or image appeared on the cover of the New York Post. That gave him a .371 batting average—and to use a winter sports term, Zohran even scored a hat trick, with three consecutive front pages at the end of January. The influence of the far-right outlet's print edition may be diminishing quickly, but their statements still fuel the Mamdani hater-verse.

The February 4 "outrage" focused on Zohran's custom-embroidered winter jacket, which hardly qualified as the most important issue of the day. As the accompanying story noted, the inside collar carried the inscription "No problem too big. No task too small." Mamdani had presented that motto at his victory night speech. That he now literally wears it proudly shows that things have changed at City Hall.

Unlike his two predecessors, Zohran appears eager to handle all aspects of the mayor's job. During his first term, Bill de Blasio implemented a big policy (universal pre-k) but did not relish the spotlight. After his comical quest for the White House, Blaz spent his final years in office fighting with you-know-who during the pandemic. Although he never spent much time dealing with nitty-gritty stuff, Eric Adams certainly enjoyed being in front of the cameras.

During his first week in office, Mamdani took on matters very large and rather small. On day three, he called on Trump to adhere to international law regarding Venezuela's sovereignty. A few days later, he helped shovel asphalt in order to smooth out a longstanding bump on the Manhattan side of the Williamsburg Bridge. There he invoked his big vs. small mantra, which seemed appropriate for that issue. As for the Maduro situation, some things are beyond the purview of City Hall.

As he transitioned from campaigning to governing, Mamdani gained early success when Governor Kathy Hochul committed an initial $1.7 billion to city childcare funding on January 8. Although she continues to resist Mamdani and the NYC-DSA's "tax the rich" demands, Hochul has the state's multibillion-dollar budget surplus at her disposal.

One month and one day into his first term, the Blaz had a memorable slip-up with a ground hog. The bumbling figure became a perpetual object of ridicule. On his third day in office, Eric Adams gave a speech in which he used "swagger" almost one dozen times. When he dropped his reelection bid last September, Adams was struggling to reach double digits in the polls. The demise was downright Shakespearean.

During his first month at City Hall, Mayor Mamdani avoided trips to the zoo and steered clear of bombast. He also kept the grassroots spirit of his mayoral campaign alive, visiting Crown Heights tenants on day one and a few weeks later hosting soccer fans for an Africa Cup of Nations watch party.

Upon taking office, Zohran's first task was to show that he could handle the job. A Siena poll released in early February found that Mamdani has a 68% approval rating among New York City voters. "Is he ready?" is no longer a relevant question.

Ted Hamm's updated edition of Run Zohran Run! will be out soon from OR Books.

REVIVING HARLEM'S RADICAL LEGACY

CONRAD BLACKBURN IS CHALLENGING A POLITICAL DYNASTY

JOHN TARLETON

HARLEM RISING: *Conrad Blackburn speaks on Martin Luther King Day at Morningside Park. He is running for Assembly District 70 in Harlem.*

By John Tarleton

Conrad Blackburn is a public defender, union organizer and democratic socialist. He is running for Assembly District 70 in Harlem, a seat held by Jordan Wright, heir to a third generation political dynasty that includes his father Keith L.T. Wright, Leader of the New York County Democratic Party who served in the Assembly from 1993 to 2016, and his grandfather, the late New York State Supreme Court Justice Bruce Wright.

While Jordan Wright is Harlem political royalty who will enjoy the support of most of the political class, Blackburn grew up in public housing and subsisted on rice and ketchup when money got tight for his single mother.

"This was my life growing up in the projects," he says.

Blackburn is endorsed by the UAW — where he played a leading role in turning his public defender office into a union shop — and New York City DSA which is feeling emboldened after Zohran Mamdani decisively won Harlem in last year's mayoral primary even though community leaders overwhelmingly backed Andrew Cuomo.

"Harlem's longtime leaders are not feeling the struggle of not being able to afford their next rent payment," Blackburn says. "Harlem's longtime leaders are not feeling the struggle of not being able to pay for childcare. They're not feeling the struggle of figuring out how they're gonna pay their healthcare bills."

His first field canvass on MLK Day underscored the surge in volunteer enthusiasm for candidates running against the Democratic Party establishment. Sixty-five volunteer canvassers gathered in 20 degree weather in Morningside Park before heading out to knock 1,100 doors, according to a campaign spokesperson. When asked if they had knocked doors for Zohran Mamdani, the overwhelming majority of the canvassers shot their hands in the air.

"We're witnessing a never before seen permanency of mass politics and it's beautiful," tweeted Cole Sandick, a New York City DSA organizer who participated in the canvas.

The following day, Blackburn joined me on The Indypendent News Hour, our weekly Tuesday evening radio show on WBAI, for his first broadcast interview which has been edited for length and clarity.

THE INDYPENDENT: Talk about your life experience, both growing up and what you have been doing in your career.

CONRAD BLACKBURN: I grew up in Miami and in Tallahassee, Florida. I grew up poor. I'm the son of a single mother who was an immigrant. It was just me, my little sister and my mom growing up, for the most part. We lived in the projects. Anything that you have read or heard about a young black man growing up in the projects experiencing, I experienced it.

I was arrested wrongfully multiple times. I've seen my mom cry over not being able to afford the light bill. We've had to boil water to bathe sometimes. I ate rice and ketchup for meals. I didn't have healthcare for 15 years of my life. I've had cousins die from gun violence.

I was deemed "smart" by America's education system and was placed in the gifted classes with a lot of other kids who were white. I made a lot of friends with those kids and I would go to their houses. I would see how they lived, and then I'd come back to my community and see how my community members lived. I've dedicated my life to trying to figure out how we can make the world more equitable for everybody.

That led me to wanting to become a public defender and be a lawyer for the people who grew up like me, because we don't always have good legal representation. I've been doing that for about eight years now. I also did a year of deportation defense because I wanted to learn and build the tools I needed to help my family members out, who are all immigrants as well.

And then you became a union organizer?

We were living paycheck to paycheck. So me and a couple of my friends who started at the same time got together and we organized my office. We talked to all of our coworkers. We spoke to ALAA: The Association of Legal Aid Attorneys and UAW, and we unionized our office.

You describe yourself as a socialist. What does that mean to you?

Socialism means to me that we the people should be in control of the resources they need to live our lives and people should be in control of their workplaces.

How do you respond when people say that socialism is a white thing, that Black voters prefer the practical, no-nonsense centrist politics offered by the Democratic party establishment?

I hear it, and don't get it. So many of our biggest socialist heroes in the past were Black people. The Black Panther Party was a socialist movement. Fred Hampton was an ardent socialist. He understood that America's history was built on the backs of Black slaves and that we have to lift our Black brothers and sisters out of poverty. But socialism also means solidarity among all working class people — Black, Latino, poor white — coming together to try and take back the means of control. It strains credulity when anyone says socialism isn't a Black thing. It's inherently Black.

If elected, what would you fight for in Albany?

First and foremost I would 100% be trying to tax the rich. When we tax the rich, we are going to invest in universal healthcare, universal childcare and affordable housing, which is this community's biggest concern.

There's currently nine democratic socialists in the state legislature. You have promised to join that group, if elected. What would it mean to be working in tandem with a bloc of fellow socialists, and do you worry that the legislative leadership would frown on you doing that?

I'm not in the business of worrying about what leadership frowns on. I care more about working with my socialist colleagues in Albany and building power and building a lasting movement that's actually going to change the material conditions for people, that's actually going to change people's lives for the better and make sure they have sustainable power going forward.

For the full interview, go to indypendent.org or soundcloud.com/the-indypendent.

INSIDE THE MIND

WHY THEY FREAK OUT WHEN FACED WITH MINOR INCREASES IN THEIR TAXES

By Lyna Bentahar

Last year's elections invited the most outside spending in New York's history to support former Gov. Andrew Cuomo's failed mayoral campaign. New York's wealthiest rushed to form super PACs in a more than $50 million effort to oppose Zohran Mamdani and bolster Cuomo.

They were motivated by a number of factors, including Cuomo's business-friendly politics and Mamdani's openness as a democratic socialist in the country's financial capital. But some of the greatest concern seemed devoted to Mamdani's advocacy for a tax hike for millionaires to fund his major policy proposals.

"I don't want to lose any more people to Palm Beach," Gov. Kathy Hochul told PIX 11.

Such concerns are not new in the city. Previous campaigns to tax the rich have generated the same backlash, not just from the wealthy but from mainstream economists. After the last major tax hike on high-income earners in 2021, the number of millionaires increased.

Still, a flank of billionaires – including a cosmetics company heir, a casino mogul and former mayor Michael Bloomberg – injected millions of dollars into Mamdani's opposition, threatening a capital flight from the city if he were successful.

Experts have dismissed the notion that a tax hike at the rate Mamdani has asked for – 2 percent for those making over $1 million – would provoke an exodus from the city. The wealthiest of them enjoy the services of wealth managers and government tax breaks that keep their true tax rate approaching zero, while their net worth continues to grow exponentially.

It is less clear, then, why wealthy people spend so much on miniscule losses for themselves, at the expense of potential gains for those less fortunate.

Small studies have suggested that wealth changes the way one perceives others on a fundamental level. It might affect how likely you are to pay attention to other people or how you might make split-second decisions. Poorer drivers might be more likely than wealthy drivers to stop for someone in a crosswalk.

But none of them are definitive. Researchers have trouble understanding the billionaire class as a socioeconomic group because there are relatively few of them. There are just over 900 billionaires in the United States, about a third of all billionaires in the world, with a combined net worth of nearly $7 trillion, according to a Swiss wealth manager. (Only about 120 billionaires live in New York.)

They're an elusive group, said Manny Galvan, a social psychologist at New York University who studies the psychology of wealth and inequality.

"There's good reason to think that billionaires have categorically different ways of thinking about the world," he added. "They live in a different kind of world."

The greatest difference – and what might inspire the ultrawealthy's reticence to higher taxes – is a belief in meritocracy.

As people become wealthier, they become increasingly convinced that their good fortunes are a product of their own actions, rather than the socioeconomic conditions they are born and raised in. And because they believe that inequality motivated them to work hard, they support policies and ideologies that would increase the inequality around them, punishing the poor with bank fees, work requirements for food aid and soaring health care premiums.

Experts believe this belief in meritocracy has given wealthy people permission to engage in unethical and high-risk-taking behaviors that, paradoxically, are associated with the lower classes. Addiction, laziness and absent families are all apparent among the billionaire class, with the archetype of a billionaire emanating particularly from the loud eccentricities of Silicon Valley figures like Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Sam Altman and David Sacks. But they do not inspire a moral panic in the same way the eccentricities of poor Americans do.

As inequality increases, billionaires have also changed how they spend. Gone are the days of often old, often oil-backed, philanthropic wealth that has been a keystone for the billionaire's public image. Where the wealthy once defined their legacies with large donations that put their names on cultural products like university buildings and museum wings, the emerging tech billionaire class increasingly invests in the short-term promises of right-wing electoral politics and A.I. data centers. After stock market regulations were imposed in response to the 2008 financial crisis, the rate of companies going public fell, meaning more wealth is being consolidated into the hands of fewer people.

Eric Mercadante, a social psychologist at New York University, offered a simpler explanation for why the rich would spend so much to oppose Mamdani: greed.

In his research, Mercadante found that people, generally, want to keep what they have and get more elsewhere. This can develop greedy personalities across socioeconomic strata that lead them to seek new material possessions and hoard them from others.

But the rich – who have greater access to lucrative careers, disposable income and politicians – can more easily engage in greedy behaviors for their own self-interest, with more consequences falling on society as a whole.

It manifests similarly to addiction, Mercadante found. Just as addictive behaviors provoke euphoric responses in the addicted person, greedy people receive a surge of "pride" when they accumulate more wealth. That pride quickly dissipates, motivating them to seek out more material gains.

"You can make an argument that at lower socioeconomic levels, that's a more rational disposition to take, because you should objectively need more," Mercadante said. "At higher economic levels, it becomes irrational. Getting more is going to give you less of a return."

OF A BILLIONAIRE

MY SUMMER AT THE COUNTRY CLUB

By John Morris

This past summer, I worked at an elite country club in an elite, coastal New England town, all of which shall remain nameless due to my signing of a non-disclosure agreement and my reluctance to burn all my bridges.

My job at this club was the food expeditor, or "expo" for short, at the club's poolside cafe. Working expo, for those of who don't know, means you facilitate coordination between the kitchen and the servers. I was in charge of making sure orders were correct and going to the right place, making sure each dish got its finishing touches, and communicating special requests from the servers to the kitchen.

The country club's members were multi-millionaire, sometimes billionaire, often-white New Yorkers who would fly their private jets to the town and do nothing but sit by the pool and eat what our cafe had to offer, which was a shockingly boring and uninspired menu of inoffensive and predictable American classics. The members seemed to love the simplicity of getting a burger and fries from a club where they were paying hundreds of thousands of dollars just to walk through the door.

The expectation, both on behalf of the members and the club's upper management, was that every request should be met with eager acceptance and understanding. These people were paying a large sum of money to be members at this club, but their frustration often went far beyond what I thought a normal human could feel at a minor inconvenience. I watched billionaires scream at me with tears in their eyes because they couldn't get breakfast after 10:30am or because they had yet to receive their side salad. I had to stop myself from laughing at each of these occurrences because to me, more than anything, it revealed to me that these people have never not gotten what they wanted. The fact that they were being told "No" or being asked to wait drove them to the point of frustration that most of us only experience on our very worst days.

However, the most egregious crime that I watched the members get away with, day in and day out, was being utterly and unforgivably boring. They all had been born into their wealth, not a single great inventor or intrepid entrepreneur among them, that this lifetime of wealth had protected them from both the highs and lows of the human experience.

I overheard a lot of their conversations, and most of what they talked about with each other was their wealth as well as their panicked concerns that Zohran Mamdani would increase their taxes. The billionaires would chide the millionaires for their measly millions, and would often joke about picking up the tab for them so they could save money. They would debate The Hamptons vs Nantucket, Florida vs New York, and discuss recent property and plane purchases. They didn't care that the menu of our cafe was a grown-up version of the kids menu because that's exactly what they wanted. Picky eaters who grew up eating whatever they told their nanny to cook for them and had never developed an appetite for anything else. They could be using their millions to fly to Tokyo or Brazil or Paris and eat racks of lamb with saffron rice and instead, they were wasting away their days by the pool and eating chicken caesar salad wraps. Most of them didn't even swim in the goddamn pool.

They have more money than God and they were spending it on $30 cheeseburgers. Like many rich people, they did not know how to spend their money. The club, with its upper six-digit initiation fee and flashy allure of being part of something that only the rich can afford, provided them with an easy place to throw their money and feel as though they had spent it on something worthwhile. These people will never understand the true value of a dollar, and so it was probably very easy to get them to spend hundreds of thousands of them. It was like I was watching mass delusion in real time.

In a world where many live within one hospital visit of poverty and each and every purchase is deliberated until it is deemed absolutely necessary, it was incredibly frustrating to cater to the childish needs and desires of people who spent their money like it was weightless. They didn't realize the power and importance of what they have because most of them have never lived without it. The world in which they live is so far removed from what so many of us experience on a daily basis, and I came to realize that that's what they were paying for at the club. It was a paradise where they could sit undisturbed amongst each other, eating the same boring food they had always eaten, raising their children to be just as spoiled and rotten as they are, and the people who existed only to help them even wore little nametags so they never had to remember the name of someone who wasn't in the same tax bracket as them.

Lives of convenience and ease rarely craft interesting individuals. To a certain extent, I almost feel bad for them, and especially for their children. They might have been able to blossom into exciting people with passion and drive and instead, they were just going to become more rich people with more money and time then they knew what to do with it. They're going to waste their days talking to each other, avoiding meeting interesting people or eating exciting food, and they will never fully understand what it means to be human. Everytime I remember that and I start to feel almost a little sad for them, I remember how easily these people's money could be used to help support universal childcare, fast and free buses, free college education, fully invested parks and libraries. I remember how easily a small tax increase on these people could change the lives of millions of New Yorkers, and I remember how staunchly opposed they are to anyone using their bountiful wealth to help anyone but themselves. Maybe if we convinced them that "Universal Childcare" is the name of a beautiful, all-inclusive country club being built upstate, they might be a bit more inclined to chip in. It's worth a shot.

GARY MARTIN

NYC VS. ICE

A NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED RESISTANCE MOVEMENT DEEPENS AND EXPANDS ITS REACH

By Nancy Hoch

This is a story about how I became a resister, joining with thousands around the country to stand against Trump's mass deportation plan. The mutuality and inclusivity I've experienced since I've gotten involved in helping to protect my neighborhood from ICE has lifted my spirits and rekindled the hope that, if we keep at it, we can turn the authoritarian tide and build a more progressive and caring world in its wake.

I attended my first Know Your Rights (KYR) training in mid-November in Kensington, a neighborhood in Brooklyn not far from my own. The workshop took place in a large apartment building off a busy street. A volunteer met me in the lobby and pointed me toward the host's apartment where nearly 20 people were crowded into the living room. We were young and old, experienced organizers and first-timers. About five other residents from the apartment building were meeting each other for the first time. A few came because they saw a flier in the building's lobby. I had heard about the workshop through Hands Off NYC, a coalition of over 100 labor, religious and community groups that formed in October to protect the city from escalating ICE raids and the threat of federal intervention. This was one of 60 events taking place across the city that day, all under the Hands Off umbrella.

Our host, a vibrant, middle-aged woman whom I'll call T., is an elementary school teacher in Sunset Park, a largely Hispanic and Asian Brooklyn neighborhood. The area is one of several known epicenters of the ICE raids now taking place in NYC. On a table in front of T. were piled packs of silver whistles on colorful neck strings, palm-sized KYR cards, stickers with a number to call "If You See ICE," and an array of political buttons including one that simply said "People Power." There were also art supplies—paper clips, scissors, markers, hole punchers. Later we would use every available surface in the apartment to turn stacks of 8 1/2 x 11 sized leaflets describing how to report ICE in both English and Spanish into pocket-sized zines. We'd also attached instruction cards to each whistle so that people would know how to use them during a raid.

T. began by asking each of us to give our name and, if we could, a word or two describing what gave us joy in resistance. The question felt inappropriate, even a little upsetting. What was there to feel joy about when federal agents were disappearing people with impunity? A vision went through my mind of ICE agents in Chicago, who, in a midnight raid just weeks before, had rappelled out of helicopters into an apartment building that looked quite a bit like the one we were sitting in now.

As we went around, people mentioned the music and inflatable costumes at demonstrations. Most, though, said it was knowing that there were others also standing up that gave them joy. I was close to tears by the time my turn came. For me, too, it was being with people who were willing to stand up and to support and take care of each other. I hadn't allowed myself to feel how much hurt I was in for my neighbors, my city, and my country. The thought that I could lean on people I had just met and they, in turn, could lean on me, brought those repressed feelings to the surface, but it also brought one I hadn't expected: I felt braver.

Like just about everyone I know, I have felt overwhelmed and depressed since Trump's re-election. My spirits have been buoyed every time I've attended one of the coordinated, nationwide demonstrations, especially as the number of people taking to the streets has grown to record-breaking numbers. Still, in between demonstrations, I have struggled with high levels of anxiety and a feeling of paralysis akin to when you are watching a horror movie. Almost a year into the Trump regime, everyone I knew was saying we have to speak out, that that's the only way we can protect each other and our democracy, but quietly I had begun to pull in as the repression had gotten more and more extreme. I could feel myself succumbing to fear, thinking twice, for example, before signing a petition and, truth be told, sometimes deciding not to sign at all.

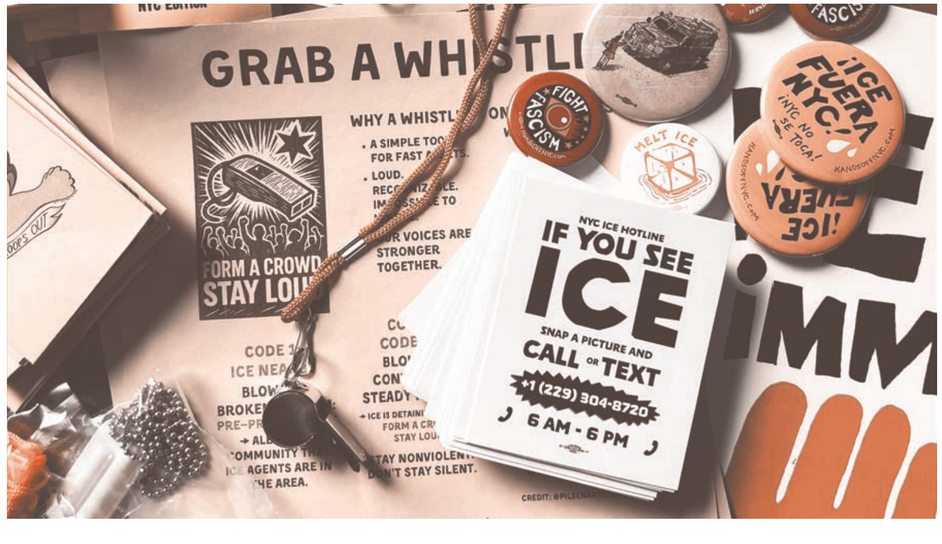
I learned later that T. had also been feeling depressed and helpless as she watched events unfold in Sunset Park. Since summer, a number of children in her school have lost a parent to ICE. One second-grade boy stopped talking after his father was taken. When a fifth grader's father was taken as he was walking the boy to school, the whole school was traumatized. When T. heard that Hands Off was calling for people to host workshops, she decided to sign up, even though she was "just an individual," not an organization like other hosts. She got up to speed by watching every video on the Hands Off website. Now she would share what she had learned with us.

"We are so lucky here in New York to be able to learn from the experiences of the resisters in L.A. and Chicago" T. told us, holding up a zine titled "How to Report Ice." It's marked "NYC Edition" but most of the text was created by people in Chicago during "Operation Midway Blitz," the government's catchy name for the brutal surge of ICE agents there. One of our tasks, as we assemble the zines, will be to change the Chicago phone number for reporting ICE to NYC's Hotline: 229-304-8720.

The resisters in Chicago also came up with the whistle protocol we now use in NYC: short broken bursts to warn people that ICE is nearby so that vulnerable people know to get inside, stay inside, or move out of reach, and long continuous blasts if someone is being detained, a sound used to summon less vulnerable people to protest and stand witness to what federal agents are doing.

Even more than the materials and techniques, T. emphasized, the most important gift people in Chicago and other targeted cities have given us is the inspiration of their courage and resourcefulness.

On Nov. 29, two days after Thanksgiving, that courage was on display in NYC when "citizen activists," as The Guardian later called them, noticed ICE vans and dozens of federal agents in a parking garage on the edge of Chinatown staging for a raid. They called the news in to the ICE Hotline, and the word spread throughout the network of rapid response Signal groups that have sprung up across the city. About 200 New Yorkers made their way to the site and, blocking the entranceway with their bodies, metal barriers, and garbage bags, kept the vehicles trapped in the garage for over an hour. When the vehicles eventually made it out, activists chased them down Canal Street. Soon their license plate numbers appeared on Signal chats around the city, alerting others.



Later that day I ran into a young friend who had taken part in the protest. "We didn't stop them," she told me, sounding a bit discouraged. "They still went off to kidnap people." The next day, however, Time Magazine reported that the ICE vehicles she saw driving off were headed to the Holland Tunnel to exit New York: the protesters had stopped them, at least for that day.

This close to the action, it's hard to know what effect we are having. We are learning as we go. So, too, is ICE. Since the two massive surges attempted in Chinatown (the raid on Nov. 29 had been preceded the week before by a surge of 50 federal agents with armored trucks which demonstrators had also disrupted) there have been no more showy raids in NYC. Instead, ICE has fallen back on quieter tactics.

In Sunset Park, for example, where there's been a big uptick in abductions since November, ICE agents patrol between six and eight in the morning. That's when people who work in the service or construction industries—job sectors where immigrants often predominate—are making their way to work through empty streets. Early morning is also the time when parents are walking their children to school. The raids have been quick, over before anyone who might come out to witness or protest the abduction even knows it is happening. This tactic is making it hard to know how many New Yorkers ICE is taking or even where, in our immigrant-rich city, federal agents are concentrating their attacks.

In response, community members in Sunset Park have ramped up early morning patrols, though they refer to them as 'care walks,' in an effort to replace militaristic-sounding language with a term that more accurately reflects their values. In some neighborhoods, inspired by what parents did in Charlotte during the surge there, people positioned themselves along major routes, creating safety corridors for anyone walking to subways or school in the mornings. These tactics seem to be working. If anyone whistles, one organizer in Sunset Park told me, ICE will often leave: "They don't try to push through whistles."

But tactics are not static. In mid-January, federal agents suddenly changed their routine, carrying out raids in the afternoon and early evening when resisters weren't expecting them and a number of people were abducted.

In the fall of 2024, the historian Timothy Snyder did a thought experiment, imagining what Trump's plan to deport 10 million people would look like on the ground. "This will involve people you know," he warned on his Substack. He predicted the policy would pit people against each other in a way that would change the country "dramatically and for the worse." Just weeks before the election, Snyder was clearly trying to motivate people to vote against

Continued on next page

HOW TO REPORT AN ICE SIGHTING

There are a set of specific details to include when reporting federal immigration agents' activity to the city-wide ICE hotline (229-304-8720) or to one of the neighborhood-based rapid response groups around the city. A way to help people remember, especially since they may be nervous or upset at what they are seeing, is the acronym SALUTE. Taking a picture of what you are seeing can also help you report more accurately.

S *for the* **SIZE** *of the group (e.g., six agents)*
A *for* **ACTION** *(e.g., what are they doing?)*
L *for the exact* **LOCATION** *(e.g., address or cross streets and borough)*
U *for the* **UNIFORMS/ CLOTHES** *they are wearing (e.g., wearing ballistic vests labeled DHS)*
T *for the* **TIME & DATE**
E *for* **EQUIPMENT** *(e.g., two people with zip ties on belts, at least 4 are armed, 2 black SUV's no identifying markings on cars)*

It may sound like a lot to have to report, but unclear or vague information can lead to unnecessary stress in the community and also waste the energy and time of rapid responders who go to the location only to find out the alert was called in hours ago and agents have moved on. While there is a tendency to assume all agents are from ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement), there are several federal agencies involved in detaining people. Most agents, whether in plain clothes or in uniforms, have the word POLICE in large letters on their tactical vests, which is confusing because they are actually not police. Look for small initials or some sort of insignia to figure out whether they are from HSI (Homeland Security Investigations), CPB (Customs and Border Patrol), or ERO (Enforcement and Removal Operations). FBI and DEA agents are also sometimes involved. A common mistake is conflating National Guard troops with immigration agents. Stationed in the city since 2024, National Guard are charged only with subway safety, not immigration enforcement.

At first, when you're on the lookout, everything may seem suspicious, but with practice you'll start to realize that seeing one black SUVs with tinted windows double parked on a busy street doesn't mean ICE is in the neighborhood. Once you know what is normal, you'll be better able to spot the signs of federal agents getting ready for a raid.

– NANCY HOCH

Continued from previous page

Trump. Listening at the time, it made me wonder: would people really turn on each other or would they, as often happens in a crisis, put aside narrow self-interest and come to each other's aid? One year on, I think we are beginning to get the answer: the American people are just not having it. Instead of driving us apart, Trump's deportation effort seems to be driving us together and making our communities stronger.

The growing power of the movement against Trump's deportation plan lies in the many ways there are to get involved. Not everyone needs to stand on a street corner with a whistle. Each person who joins a resistance group brings their own unique skills and contacts and each group comes up with a plan of action based on the abilities of its members and their collective knowledge of the neighborhood. Groups are teaming up with long-standing mutual aid groups, food pantries, and churches to bring food and other necessities to people afraid to leave their homes. A group in Chicago has been buying out local food truck vendors early in the day and distributing the food themselves, so that the vendors, often immigrants, can quickly get off the streets. When a lawyer—not an immigration lawyer—joined a group in Brooklyn, he put together a list of immigration lawyers that immigrants, unsure of whether their own legal advisors were making legitimate suggestions, could contact to get a free second opinion. Another group in Brooklyn is creating a zine that details what to do ahead of time—organize documents, create a childcare plan—in case you or someone you love is abducted.

One area of work beginning to loom large is addressing the staggering psychological and economic distress ICE abductions leave in their wake. Often it is the breadwinner who is taken on their way to or at work, leaving the rest of the family not only emotionally traumatized, but also struggling to pay for rent and food, let alone any legal fees or court bonds they may now need to raise. Go Fund Me drives can only go so far in what are often poor and working-class neighborhoods, so community groups are helping families figure out other ways to bring in money. If the remaining adults in a household can make empanadas or provide childcare or cleaning services, for example, groups try to connect them to members of the community that can pay for those services.

"Showing that people are not alone is a huge part of aftercare," one organizer told me. It's not always easy, though, in a big city like New York, to help the folks left behind. In one 40-unit apartment building where 10 of the units have lost someone to ICE, the remaining residents were leary of opening up to outsiders, even to a community group offering help. Only when a trusted community member was able to bridge the gap did support begin to flow. By December, the group was able to host a holiday party for the residents bringing gifts for all the kids in the building.

The hyper-local nature of these actions necessitates that people get involved, sometimes on a daily basis, with others in their community. In the process, we are building a network of compassion and commitment to core values of justice and democracy which may well outlive the current crisis. Some observers, including the sociologist Maria J. Stephan, see this movement to protect ourselves and our neighbors from ICE as laying vital groundwork for the kind of citizen actions we will need to protect our elections next fall from manipulation by Trump and the federal government. Ezra Levin, Co-Executive Director of Indivisible, writing supporters in early February to announce March 28 as the date of the next No Kings demonstration, is thinking along the same lines: "To defeat fascism," he wrote, "we're going to have to marry the breadth of No Kings mobilizations with the depth of organizing we're seeing in the Twin Cities."

INSTEAD OF DRIVING US APART, TRUMP'S DEPORTATION EFFORT SEEMS TO BE DRIVING US TOGETHER.

The weekend following the thwarted raid on Chinatown, Hands Off began holding four-hour mass KYR trainings in every borough. So many people signed up for the one in Brooklyn, they had to cap attendance at 1,300. During the workshop, people broke into neighborhood groups to discuss how to organize in their particular communities. Hands Off Signal chats were formed for each neighborhood and a few days later I was able to sign up for the one covering mine. The welcome message explained the chat could be used "for discussion, community building, organizing, and rapid response" and included the warning, "This chat is not fully vetted, so be mindful of what you say. Do not share personal details, or say anything you would not like read back to you in court."

I'm a member of a local community garden which got its start over a decade ago when neighbors came together to clean up an abandoned lot. Located in the "Little Caribbean" part of Flatbush, we are a diverse group with a listserv that is approaching a thousand people. We grow food communally, run a neighborhood food scrap drop-off program, and host arts and educational events including a children's summer camp. We are what sociologists sometimes call "a third space"—neither home nor work, the garden is a place where people from different walks of life can meet each other, a place where community is being grown right alongside the plants. So, it made sense that in early December someone on our garden listserv raised a question about what we could do to protect our neighbors and our neighborhood from ICE. Remembering that T. had had no prior experience when she hosted her workshop, I decided to take the plunge and, after first making sure that garden leaders were in agreement, put out a call for garden members to come to a KYR workshop at my house.

With barely a week's notice and two weekends before Xmas, 35 people showed up. The first big snow of the season had just blown in and people arrived in boots and big winter coats. Our workshop coincided with Hands Off's second big weekend of community action, and we were listed as one of 120 events being offered across the city.

We were already expanding our boundaries, becoming more than just garden members; folks had extended the invitation to neighbors and friends. One garden member brought her daughter, an immigration lawyer. Amanda, a member of our compost team, whose day job is designing KYR materials for the American Friends Service Committee

NANCY HOCH

(AFSC) had volunteered to run the workshop.

After Amanda's presentation, we brainstormed what our garden community could do. People pointed out that there are longstanding groups already doing powerful immigrant support work in the neighborhood including Caribbean equality groups, tenants unions, mutual aid groups, churches, and, more recently, rapid response ICE watch groups that were already patrolling. We agreed that we needed to learn more about these groups and find ways to support and dovetail our work with theirs. We brainstormed other ways the garden could help, considering how our unique space could be used to help support, inspire, and educate people. We agreed we wanted to use our sidewalk-facing fence to post information the community can use, and we made a plan to meet again as a whole group after the holidays.

The following weekend, on the Saturday before Christmas, we held our first tabling event. We set up on the sidewalk just in front of the Garden. It was so cold that the eight of us were bundled to the max. Someone had brought hot chocolate to share. Inside the garden, the compost team was celebrating the end of their season and neighbors were coming by to drop their food scraps off for the last time until we reopen in the spring.

We had heard from other groups that the whistle kits would be a great draw and it was true: nearly every passerby stopped to find out why we were handing them out and stayed to talk about the situation with ICE. We quickly discovered that it was a two-way street: we learned, as we talked to people, that there had already been a number of ICE raids on nearby businesses—mostly food establishments over on Nostrand Avenue. One person reported seeing ICE agents walking up and down the same street asking for people's ID. Until we tabled, we didn't know what was happening just blocks from our garden. We had discussed at our first meeting the need to get KYR information to local business owners and workers. Now that effort would rise to a top priority.

Our second meeting took place on Jan. 10, just three days after Renee Good was murdered in Minneapolis. We had gathered at the public library this time and almost 40 people had come out. Although we had a full agenda, I started by asking how people were doing and what was sustaining them as they grappled with the brutality we were seeing against the people of Minneapolis. I don't know what I expected, maybe tears or fear, but what I heard from everyone who spoke was neither. One person talked about her anger and how she would channel it into the work, another about their determination to speak up all the louder and harder, a third said, rather than despair, she was going to find ways to rise up in celebration and joy.

DOING THE WORK: *Members of a community garden in Flatbush meet in their neighborhood library to make plans for sharing information with local businesses about how to respond if ICE shows up at their door.*

In a newsletter T. had sent out to her workshop group around Christmas time, she focused on a child she has been working with: "One sweet one I will call S," she wrote, "has lost her father. She's terrified to leave her building. She and I talked about what it means to be brave. Brave is not being fearless. Brave is having fear and taking action anyway. We read a lovely book called I Am Courage together and then played with Legos. S didn't deserve to be burdened with this fear."

I think about how back in November, just two short months ago, feeling fearful nearly kept me from becoming active. A friend of mine who used to sign his emails 'stay safe' has begun to sign his letters, "stay brave." We are cobbling together this resistance from thousands of small gestures and actions, one poster in a window, one banner on the garden fence, one meeting of neighbors, one meal hand-delivered, one detention we helped someone avoid. We aren't responsible for fixing everything, but everything that we do is turning out, when so many are doing something, to be important.

I circle back to check in with T. The abductions in Sunset Park have been going on for months now and at a devastating pace. "I still feel hopeless sometimes," she tells me, "but I have met so many strong people and everyone is sharing." As we talk, T and I decide to put out a call for someone to translate the book I Am Courage into Spanish so that the children of Sunset Park and their parents and teachers and all of us, really, can remember that just because we are afraid, it doesn't mean that we aren't brave.

To sign up for the next round of mass KYR trainings or to attend an event during Hands Off's third weekend of community action, Feb. 21-22, go to www.handsoffnyc.com

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

The Constitution covers all persons in the United States, not just citizens. This means non-citizens, including undocumented immigrants, have rights.

If ICE comes to your door, you do not have to let them in unless agents have a judicial warrant signed by a judge.

Ask the agent to slide the warrant under the door or hold it up to a window so that you can check to see if is judicial warrant. Do not open your door to look at the warrant. Opening your door could be taken as giving agents permission to enter your home. Businesses can create a protected space by closing and locking their doors so that ICE can only enter with a judicial warrant signed by a judge. Designated employee-only areas in a workplace, such as the kitchen in a restaurant, are also considered protected spaces that ICE must have a judicial warrant to enter.

Be Aware! ICE agents are allowed to lie to you. They might say they are "police," for example, and that they are looking for so-and-so because he is a victim of identity theft. Or they might claim that the warrant they have is a judicial warrant when it is not. If you do allow agents to enter your home or business and then change your mind, you can still withdraw your consent and ask them to leave. You should never lie to a federal agent. If you are feeling pressed to respond, exercise your Constitutional right to remain silent by saying, "I don't wish to talk to you." You can also say "I want to talk to my lawyer" or "I do not consent to you entering my house or to this search (of my car, house, person)." Even if the agents illegally break in, it's important to say these things, since such statements may later help you in court.

You have a right to film or otherwise document ICE actions as long as you don't interfere. Documenting is extremely important, first, because ICE agents know they are being watched, second, because when agents act illegally there is evidence to use in court, and third, because it may help family members of a detained person to know the circumstances under which their loved one was taken. If an ICE agent orders you to back up while you are filming, leave your camera on as you do, so that you have a record of obeying the order.

– NANCY HOCH

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THE VIEW FROM MINNEAPOLIS

OUR CITY STANDS UP FOR MORE THAN OUR NEIGHBORS, BUT FOR THE AMERICA THAT NEVER HAS BEEN YET

LOVE WILL DEFEAT THE FASCISTS
LOVE WILL DEFEAT THE FACISTS
LOVE WILL DEFEAT MISOGYNISTS
LOVE IS PINEFUL. LOVE WINS.
FOR OUR IMMIGRANT AND LGBTQIA+ NEIGHBORS
THE CONSTITUTION AND RULE OF LAW
LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL
ICE OUT OF MN
10 ICE KING FEAR
DEPORT ICE

LUCAS SANTIAGO

FIRE & ICE: *Minneapolis residents pour into the streets to protest the federal government's violent and lawless occupation of their city that began in December.*

By Cara Letofsky

MINNEAPOLIS—The first visible sign that Trump's Immigration and Customs Enforcement had arrived in my community was last November, when just before Thanksgiving, ICE agents raided Bro-Tek, a small manufacturing company in St Paul. They nabbed 14 people, most of whom lacked any criminal record.

The response from residents, advocates, and political leaders was swift. A couple of hundred people showed up on one of the first cold days of the season to declare their commitment to protecting the community from unjustifiable detainment and deportations.

But it wasn't the first time we gathered to stand against attacks on our community.

PREPARING FOR THE WORST

Ever since voters sent Donald Trump back to the White House, people across this progressive bastion have been meeting to build ways to stand up to Trump and the MAGA Republicans, seeking ways to buttress against attacks on marginalized communities. Some groups met weekly to hold signs on street corners; others practiced "community is resistance" by holding monthly potlucks to meet others concerned about Trump's penchant for authoritarianism; and still others hosted immigrant rights legal observer trainings in their living rooms. We were showing up to create the world we wanted to live in, even as Trump was dismantling it.

We were also watching what federal agents from the various agencies collectively referred to as "ICE" were doing in other cities. And we were taking note of how people organized themselves in response. We learned about whistles, the networks that provided rides, food deliveries, and the importance of capturing ICE's kidnappings and attacks on peaceful protestors on video.

Even though we knew Trump would inevitably turn his personal army on Minneapolis, it still sounded ridiculous when, after several days of insulting our Somali-born Congresswoman Ilhan Omar and calling Somalis "garbage", Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem announced that Minneapolis would be the next target in what they dubbed "Operation Metro Surge".

Throughout December, more ICE agents showed up on our streets, while members of the Somali and Latino communities — whether citizens, legal residents, or not — were staying away from their traditional destinations.

In the midst of the traditional holiday hubbub, the community connections ignited in preparation. One of the weekly street corner vigilers started handing out whistles. The group chats and local business and neighborhood organizations encouraged people to visit immigrant-run businesses up and down Lake Street – the main street across South Minneapolis that has always been home to new immigrants. Legal observer and Know Your Rights trainings moved from living rooms to auditoriums and church sanctuaries. And thousands of people faced bitterly cold temperatures to march the almost two miles from Mercado Central — a hub of small Latino entrepreneurs — to Karmel Mall — a hub for small Somali entrepreneurs in support of immigrant communities.

The hyper-local groups of neighbors that had formed to protect members of our community had grown into full-on human networks with an intentional anti-authoritarian ethos. With Operation Metro Surge underway, signups swelled. Not just in our corner of Minneapolis, but throughout this city of 430,000 people.

As December drew to a close, an influencer with ties to MAGA and Republicans released a video of himself visiting Somali-run childcare centers that received state support, demanding to see the children in their care, and accusing them of fraud. The video got millions of views and was amplified by Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, further targeting the Somali community.

Then, just days into the new year, veteran ICE agent Jonathan Ross killed community observer Renee Good while she was trying to hightail it away from him. Once again, the eyes of the country turned to Minneapolis, and the tension in the city turned up to 11.

ICE'S PERFORMATIVE AGGRESSION

After Good's murder, ICE agents' performative aggressive tactics ramped up. Minneapolis and St Paul began to feel like a war zone. Lawless troops were roving the city streets, nearby suburbs, and some smaller communities outside the metro area with immigrant populations.

Testimonies captured on video and witnessed in person flooded in. Friends shared firsthand accounts of neighbors being taken from their homes, their cars, while exiting a store, while at work. Stories emerged of construction workers being trapped on rooftops, of ICE having lunch at a Mexican restaurant, then returning afterwards to detain the staff who had just prepared their meal. They nabbed an observer from the street in front of my sister's house, leaving their car with the bashed-in window on the street. ("Those ASSHOLES!!!," she texted. "They were just outside my front door. Then gone".) That was also the morning that the Rapid Response Signal channel reported Gregory Bovino, the Trump administration's "commander at large" for Operation Metro Surge, just a

Continued on page 23

‘FUCKING BITCH’

RENEE GOOD’S MURDER WAS A PURE EXPRESSION OF PATRIARCHY’S ABUSE OF WOMEN

LYNNE FOSTER

By Karen Malpede

It begins with a virgin. It always does. Deflowering is a source of strength. Taking a virgin is proof of incontestable power. In the greater world, that is, the world that men like him inhabit. It is not a source of power over her — that he has power over her goes without saying, she is defenseless. While he is a god. Even if she argues, even if she struggles, he is more powerful than her, her mother’s daughter, Persephone. Larger. Armed. With back-up force. Hades, god of the underworld

He needs her because she’s innocent. She’s pure. He needs her because without her he cannot fight the war. Without her sacrifice, though she is his daughter, Iphigenia, the ships won’t sail. Though he is her father, he will let her die. He’s a fighter, above all. He needs her, Cassandra, because she sees things. Because she is a prophetess. He wants her. If she fights back, if she outruns him, he, Apollo, will condemn her. He is the most beautiful of all, the god of light. He lets her stay inside his temple. She can be his servant. He lets her keep that power that is hers. She can see into the future. But, he makes sure that no one will believe her. He didn’t believe her when she screamed, “no”. “Don’t fight the war,” she tells her father. He ignores her. He thinks she is crazy, delusional. He goes to war despite her, to show her. Ten years later, his city falls.

He has to shut her up. “Fucking bitch,” he screams before he shoots, or as he shoots, or just after he sees his first bullet enter her brain. “Fucking bitch,” his partner screams as he watches the first, the second, the third bullet enter her head. He does not wrest the gun from his partner’s hand. There are three ICE agents, right there, not one nor the other attempts to stop the shooter.

“They killed my wife,” the other woman screams. There are two of them. Women together, that is. That makes it worse. She is left to bleed out in her car, rammed against another. They will not let the medics approach with an ambulance. They will not let a physician on the side of the road approach. “I’m a doctor,” he yells. He begs to be allowed to see if she still has a pulse. She’s been shot three times in the head in front of neighbors. She has no pulse. Why should they let the fucking doctor approach the fucking bitch. She got what she deserves. They always do. Every fucking bitch since recorded time. The medics have to walk three blocks, dragging a stretcher through the snow; they finally arrive, 15 minutes after the fucking bitch is shot.

This is not, strictly speaking, a sexual assault. Nevertheless, it reeks of sex, “fucking bitch” he screams. He is not fucking the bitch, but she deserves to be fucked and since there are two of them, two women plus a dog together, they or she deserve to be fucked. Perhaps, he meant the dog, “fucking bitch,” but the dog is silent, does not bark in the back seat of the car. The other woman has not had time to get back in. She would have, but the driver has been shot. She lurches forward, her foot on the accelerator. The car speeds forward. She is trying to get away even after death. Dead, she cannot help but crash into another car. Rear-end it. Like he would have done to her, “fucking bitch,” if he had her alone in an alley somewhere, drive his cock straight up her ass. Instead, he has a gun, an extension of himself. He does not hesitate to shoot first. Before she does what he says. He said it twice. Maybe he would have fucked her then. But there are people watching him.

He is an Iraq war veteran. How many fucking bitches has he killed before? No one bothered to write them down; his kill count. No one bothered to video his kill(s). He wore no body cam, over there. Here he has to wear one. It’s the law. He’s back home in a civilized country. He can’t just shoot without a camera on. But there is no law against screaming “fucking bitch” and firing his gun. He was dragged by a car several months ago. He suffered 20 stitches more or less. He has it in for her. Though she was not driving that car. A man was driving that car. But here is a fucking bitch refusing to do as he says. Get out of the car. Exit the car, fucking bitch. Do what I tell you to do. If you do what I tell you to do, you will be all right. If you don’t shout. If she had done as he told her to do, she would be still alive. Perhaps. If she had gotten out of her car, hands up, he might not have shot, or not. The other woman made him angry. She called him “big boy,” she called him “big boy” like he was not a man. He will show her who the boss is. She made him angry. Always, she makes him angry before he shoots. He does not shoot if he is not angry. He only shoots because he is pissed.

Did he say that to the Iraqi woman who did not speak his language? Exit the house, you fucking bitch, when he came at night knocking on her door. He did not knock. He broke down the door. There were foreign terrorists inside their house, inside their country. Terrorists. He didn’t have to knock. He burst into the house. He shot first. Before they got out of bed in their nightclothes. Fucking bitch. He said or thought. Fucking bitch as she bled out in front of her husband, in front of her kids. In front of her wife. In front of her dog in the back seat.

This is how the war comes home. The guy is terrified. He is frightened but he has a gun. He has been shot at. He has shot and been shot at. Or maybe he never was shot at at all. Maybe he always shoots first and that is why he is here today on this suburban street, yelling fucking bitch. And shooting first.

“I am not mad at you,” Renee Good said. Like Christ. She dies with forgiveness on her lips. A sacrifice. A sacrifice so the war can start. This is how the war comes home. They need to be put in their place. They have to know it doesn’t matter what they say. It matters what he does. She called him “big boy.” The one behind the car. One of them deserves to die. One of them deserves to have her head blown off. “Big boy,” the other woman said, “go get some lunch”. Fucking bitch. “I’m not mad at you.” She will never say that again. He showed her. He showed her who the big boy is.

HUDSON VALLEY RALLIES AGAINST ICE BOX

FEDS SEEKING TO TURN WAREHOUSE INTO 1,500-BED JAIL

HENRY SMITH/AMERICAN IMAGE NEWS SERVICE

ONE PEOPLE: *Maria Christina of Rural Migrant Ministry speaks at a Jan. 29 protest in Chester, NY.*

By Elsie Carson-Holt

The Department of Homeland Security has announced it is purchasing a warehouse in the village of Chester, New York to function as an ICE "processing facility," alarming residents and advocates across the Hudson Valley.

The move was announced on Jan. 8, with DHS saying that they plan "to purchase, occupy and rehabilitate a warehouse property…in Chester, NY in support of ICE operations," in an online announcement. The facility would hold as many as 1,500 people. The Village of Chester (pop. 4,000) is located about an hour north of New York City.

Critics of the project vented their opposition at a Jan.13 public hearing in Chester that drew around 400 people, according to media reports. A similar number of people joined a Jan. 29 protest in Chester.

Further up the Hudson River, a town hall meeting about the proposed facility in Poughkeepsie was filled to overflowing and some people were turned away, says Daniel Atonna, a member of the Poughkeepsie City Council and an organizer with the Mid-Hudson Valley chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America.

"There has been an extreme outpouring of opposition at this detention center," Atonna told *The Indypendent*. "The Hudson Valley really is one community, and we're very worried about our neighbors being kidnapped by ICE."

ICE's move on Chester comes as the Trump administration is seeking to supercharge its deportation campaign. ICE currently holds 70,000 detainees per day nationwide, an all-time record. The Trump administration is looking to more than double that capacity by building 23 new detention facilities nationwide, including the one in Chester, with a total of 76,500 beds, according to Bloomberg. This push is meeting fierce opposition across the country including in rural communities in red states that voted for Trump.

The proposed facility in Chester is located at 29 Elizabeth Drive, within a two to three mile radius of an elementary school, several churches, and a park with a playground. If the facility were to be purchased and occupied it would "severely disrupt the economy," says Maria Martinez, a legislative advocacy consultant at Rural and Migrant Ministry.

"The impact of the local economy will be major. But Chester is not going to be the only city that will be impacted. We're talking about the surrounding cities, like Middletown and Newburgh, Warwick, Poughkeepsie," said Martinez. "Just because the facility is being built in Chester doesn't mean that only people who live in Chester will be detained. Best believe that anyone across the state from down to Long Island up to Albany or Buffalo will be impacted."

Martinez, whose own parents were deported by ICE under the first Trump administration, said that people at risk of deportation and their allies are "terrified" at the possibility of an ICE detention facility being established in their backyard.

After the Jan. 29 rally in Chester which Martinez spoke at, she met a woman who approached her to give her a hug, and then broke down sobbing in her arms.

"I know what it feels like to have my family torn apart," Martinez told *The Indy*. "People are devastated. Fear is what all of these people are living in every day," she said, adding that some of the Rural and Migrant Ministries partners and members have already been impacted by immigrant detentions and deportations.

Chester is just one of several cities across America that may see an ICE facility in the coming months. Thanks to the passage of President Trump's so-called "Big Beautiful Bill," which massively increased ICE's funding, more ICE detention sites are being built to facilitate President Trump's mass deportation crusade.

Other cities with proposed sites include Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Roxbury, New Jersey, reports The Washington Post. The Post added that the Chester facility, formerly an auto parts distribution center, "became so unbearably hot during summer months that two people who used to work there said it was akin to being stuck inside an aluminum shed."

The warehouse in Chester is currently owned by an LLC linked to former Trump Advisor Carl Ichan. Democrats have widely opposed the sale of the facility to ICE, including Rep. Pat Ryan (D-NY18), who attended the Jan. 29 rally. The Chester Town Board is also set to pass two resolutions reaffirming its opposition to the facility and supporting legislation in the New York State Legislature known as the MELT Act, which would prohibit ICE agents from wearing masks.

Still, as Atonna points out, these measures stop short of calling for abolishing ICE in its entirety.

"Schumer, Gillibrand, Ryan and Riley, they've been voting to fund ICE over and over again. In fact, there was a vote in the House, and I believe Pat Ryan and Josh Riley both voted to thank ice on some kind of resolution that was thanking ICE," Atonna said.

"The problem isn't just that ICE is proposing to build a facility here in our backyard. The problem is that ICE exists in the first place, and that it's terrorizing our neighbors, kidnapping our neighbors, literally executing people in broad daylight in the street," he added. "This agency has only existed since 2003. It is not some permanent part of America. There was a time before ICE, and there will be a time after ICE."

AI & NURSES

Continued from page 5

AI & MENTAL HEALTH CARE

AI has also slowly entered the market to meet the unsatisfied demand for mental-health providers. Dr. R understands that to an extent, but its use still concerns him.

"There's an access problem. There's a cost problem, because some people don't have insurance, or they don't have enough insurance. And, there's a numbers problem, which is that we don't have enough providers to give people the amount of mental-health care that is needed out in the world," he said.

"Clearly, if we could find a way to extend the care that we have, this sounds like a good thing, right?" he continued. "And I think it could be, but we need it to be done very carefully. Not as a replacement for human care for people who are struggling with mental-health issues, but as an extender."

Bias in AI is also a major problem. A Nature study found that "when prompted about speakers of African American English, large-language models spit out negative stereotypes similar to—or even worse than—attitudes held in the 1930s." Another study, from Cell Reports Medicine, found that "AI used for health care is vulnerable to problems that have been observed in other fields, such as racial bias and gender bias."

But it's not like racism or sexism doesn't already exist with human providers, Dr. R pointed out. "People who have dealt with inequities in our system don't always have the best human-to-human experience in clinical settings. They may experience microaggressions or racism and these things, AI tools, if they're done right and don't show that same kind of bias, might be more comfortable for people."

This observation is backed up by a study from the National Health Services in the United Kingdom, which found that nonbinary people and ethnic minorities who used an AI referral-assistant tool called Limbic were more likely to seek mental-health care. Dr. R thinks that's because they felt less stigma when speaking to a chatbot than they would with a human provider.

Regardless, he is "worried about profit-driven AI, because it certainly can keep things more efficient and cheaper, but could mean being implemented before it has been really shown, through research, that it actually meets the scientific standard."

Ultimately, Dr. R said, he is "a firm believer in one of the core parts of human thriving is social connection."

Dr. Christopher Kanyongolo, a Brooklyn dentist, was involved in a trial that looked at AI's efficacy in diagnosing dental diseases. He was not very impressed with the technology.

"It is currently very limited in the field of dentistry. It was over-diagnosing. Every little thing it perceived as pathology, which in some cases it wasn't," he said.

Still, he said he would use it if the technology became more accurate. "AI is here to stay. It's important in all other industries, like technology and business, and everybody's using it. I don't think health care is going to be an exception," he said.

WHO WILL DO THE DIAGNOSIS?

Dr. Kanyongolo emphasized that he would use it as a tool, but not as a replacement for his 20 years of experience.

"My worry is that it depends on how it was programmed: Who ended up putting these algorithms in place, or the designed the way these AI tools diagnose?" he said. "Who set up this technology? You have to use it as an aid to your diagnosis, not as the one doing the diagnosis."

As negotiations continue during the nurses' strike, Latona told *The Indy* that the New York State Nurses Association union is asking for a few basic commitments about AI in their workplace: that it doesn't override clinical judgment, and nurses can escalate questioning it when needed; that they will not be disciplined for reporting errors in AI documentation; that it will not cause any diminishment of any in-person nurse/patient care; that management will give 30 days' notice of changes and implementation of AI; and that management will allow nurse feedback after it is implemented.

"Nursing is such a unique profession because it is Caregiving 101," Latona said. "You are with these patients, from their first breaths to their last, their hardest days and their most joyous days. Having a physical person there at the bedside, whether that's for predicting care or being able to pick up subtleties that might not be present in something like vital signs, is invaluable."

NYCHA

Continued from page 6

work," Vanderhorst said.

Tenants do not trust the information given by NYCHA or HOU, said one tenant, who wished to be called K.

"HOU and NYCHA keep passing us on to each other. I don't know who is giving me true information," K. said.

Vanderhorst said that even though HOU employees knew his sister is not listed as head of their household, they had her sign the relocation agreement papers instead of his mother, and suggested she go to court to be named head of household. His sister's son died recently, which Vanderhorst said she talked about in meetings with HOU.

"I felt that they were using the loss of her son as an excuse to move us," he said. "For them to use her kindness as a weakness, that's pushing the envelope and that is dead wrong."

Vanderhorst said that when he went to see the temporary apartment offered to his family, there was a hole in the wall, some shattered glass on the floor, and the mattresses were stained. His mother and niece need to share a room so that his mother can supervise his niece, who gets seizures, but Vanderhorst said the room was tiny compared to the room in their current apartment.

When they decided to not move to the temporary unit, Vanderhorst said HOU employees told him that they'd be charged rent for both it and their current apartment—which he said isn't true. Hillgardner said the temporary apartments must be "comparable" to the tenants' current homes.

Santiago said that NYCHA told the Fulton 11 tenants that HOU was in charge of the building now, but at a meeting in late January, tenants were told NYCHA was still managing the building.

K. said that HOU gave their family "deadlines" for relocation, or else NYCHA would give the temporary apartment offered them to someone else. "It feels like blackmail or a threat," they said.

Santiago said the main threat is "that if we do not move, we will lose our tenancy."

Hillgardner said the repeated interruptions of utilities and commencement of frivolous court actions against tenants constitute harassment.

In November, NYCHA filed cases against 18 tenants, requesting a preliminary injunction to force them to accept relocation. But in early December, a judge denied that request, and NYCHA withdrew those cases shortly thereafter.

A VICTORY IN COURT

Hillgardner said that he plans to file harassment cases against NYCHA and its PACT partners in Housing Court soon, on behalf of both Fulton 11 and Chelsea Addition tenants. Hillgardner said he is hoping they get issued a Class C violation of the city's housing code, the most serious category, to "tar and feather them."

Hillgardner said it was against federal housing law for NYCHA to begin the relocation process before their RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration) conversion commitments (RCCs) had been issued. NYCHA and its partners have been arguing that federal restrictions on relocation don't apply if people are being moved somewhere else in the same building or complex of buildings. But, Hillgardner said, this rule is for "phased rehabilitation" projects, where people are moved for less than a year. The relocated FEC tenants would have to wait until the first new buildings are completed, at least three years.

Hillgardner said the RCC for Chelsea Addition hasn't been issued yet, but the Fulton 11 one was issued in late January.

Since then, he said, his clients have been in "wait-and-see mode." He said that the "closing" of the building transfer is what triggers the conversion from Section 9 to Section 8 leases, and that cannot happen until the building is vacant.

"They try to butter us up by making promises that, so far, never came. You wonder why we have trust issues," Santiago said. "If this was legit and you worked with us, maybe people would have had a change of heart. Now, we've come to understand that you don't care about us, and we don't want to move.""

CAR-FREE STREETS

PASEO PARK IN JACKSON HEIGHTS IS JUST THE BEGINNING, ADVOCATES SAY

CHASE KIHN

By Eilean Faltin

Walking down the middle of a city street feels too good to be true at first. When I bring friends to 34th Avenue, they almost always ask, "Are you sure we're allowed to be here?" There are no cars rushing past, no engines revving, no smell of exhaust. Instead, the street is filled with children on scooters, pollinator gardens, soccer games, anti-fascist organizers holding meetings, Zumba classes and neighbors stopping to say hello.

This stretch of Queens (officially renamed Paseo Park in November 2025) runs for 26 consecutive car-free blocks, stretching from the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway to Junction Boulevard (also the official borders of Jackson Heights).

The DOT originally closed 34th Avenue to traffic in May 2020 as a COVID emergency response, along with 200 other city streets. After five years of unprecedented popularity and sustained community activism to secure public space in Jackson Heights — which offers just two square feet of open space per person, compared to the city-wide average of 146 square feet— the city allocated $90 million in capital funding to make Paseo Park a permanent linear park in June 2025. Now, as the capital project enters its design phase, the Avenue's future hangs in the balance and the city-wide or nation-wide implications of this radical experiment in urban space remain unclear.

The 34th Avenue Open Streets Coalition and the Alliance for Paseo Park have emerged as the two leading community groups shaping Paseo Park's future. The Open Streets Coalition (the DOT's official partner) has managed the daily life of 34th Avenue since 2020 — organizing bike rides, clothing distributions, immigration workshops and a constant rotation of classes and events.

"There's always something to draw you out onto the street, something that normally you'd have to go into a building to access," said Jim Burke, a leader with the Open Streets Coalition, Transportation Alternatives and Riders Alliance. "If we have a hula hoop class, we might invite the Department of Health to give a lesson on food handlers' licence, or we might invite Elmhurst Hospital to take blood pressure and talk about heart health."

The Alliance for Paseo Park (APP) is more concerned with the structural re-design of the Avenue. In June 2025, the APP released their "Community Roadmap," a 76-page survey and plan for Paseo Park's future based on years of public engagement. "We have an opportunity to make generational change, and we want to make sure that the community leads that process," said Dawn Siff, an APP Board Member.

In October 2025, the DOT released the first prototype of their official re-design, offering two options: "promenade" and "meander." Although they arrange car-free plazas differently, both options involve re-opening some blocks to cars. While some residents, especially those that live along 34th Avenue, rejoiced at the thought of improved parking accessibility, others believed that these options, far from the continuous green spaces proposed in the Community Roadmap, represented the DOT's narrow and unfit perspective.

DOT'S BLIND SPOT

"The DOT's… job is to move people and goods from Point A to Point B. The biggest challenge is asking an agency whose job is transportation to think creatively about public space," said Donovan Finn, an urban planner and Jackson Heights resident. "I'm not saying they're not trying, but it's not the agency's main concern." Finn emphasized how high the stakes are: "If the design isn't right the first time, there's not another $90 million. We get one shot."

While Paseo Park takes form, many are wondering how it could grow into something much larger. Jim Burke believes that this is the start of a "city-wide, interconnected network of Open Streets." Through weekly bike rides with the Riders Alliance, Burke is identifying routes that connect parks, schools, cultural institutions, and Open Streets. This data will be used as part of the city's nascent Greenways initiative (a collaboration between the Parks Department and the DOT).

Greenways is part of an emerging standard of cross-agency collaboration for public space. In early 2023, disgraced former mayor, Eric Adams, appointed Ya-Ting Liu as the city's first ever Chief Public Realm Officer, along with allocating $375 million to create and improve public spaces across the five boroughs. Jackson Heights City Council Member Shekar Krishnan is hopeful that the new Mamdani administration will build on this precedent, saying "[Mamdani] shares our vision of supporting, expanding and being creative with public space."

City-wide, permanent pedestrianization projects like Barcelona's Superblocks have already found success in Europe and South America, but in U.S. cities, the bonds of car culture are harder to break. "The way we have been building dense cities in the U.S. is unsustainable," said Clarence Eckerson, who directs documentaries on transportation design with Streetfilms. "We remain timid to implement large scale (car-free or car-light) networks that would greatly benefit citizens and businesses alike."

Paseo Park is not just a break from cars. It's a town hall, a museum, a marketplace and a living model of community ownership. "Open Streets means that we've evolved to realize that streets can serve more than one function… and that we have all this potential space" said Donovan Finn.

Anjali Deshmukh, co-founder of Street Works, an annual festival on Paseo Park, brings activists and artists together to explore co-creation through participatory art and discussion. She explained that the festival is inseparable from its location, saying "We use the street as both a practical space to showcase art, and as a symbol for democracy. Shared space and shared infrastructure… is democracy in its physical form." Deshmukh plans to start a quarterly permit training workshop in 2026 to further decentralize control over Paseo Park.

Jim Burke described Paseo Park's effect on the Jackson Heights community: "Now none of us can walk a block without seeing a familiar face. We can warn each other if we see ICE, or tell everybody if we're doing a food distribution. It's become like a small town in the city." Paseo Park has shown the tangible benefits of reclaiming city streets from cars. Its success is proof that New Yorkers are ready to get back outside, meet their neighbors and demand streets that are fit for collective life.

WHEN WARM WEATHER RETURNS: *Paseo Park will be filled with people and buzzing with activities.*

BLACK BOOKSTORES KEEP EVOLVING

Black-Owned: The Revolutionary Life of the Black Bookstore
By Char Adams
Tiny Rep Books (a Penguin Random House subsidiary),
304 pages, November 2025

By Jessica Max Stein

In Black-Owned: The Revolutionary Life of the Black Bookstore, Char Adams promises her readers "vivid stories a person could get lost in" and she delivers. The book charmingly recounts the storied history of America's Black literary commercial and community spaces, with everyone from Toni Morrison to Terry McMillan to Talib Kweli casually strolling through its pages. This streamlined, novelistic read belies Adams' no-stone-unturned research and extensive original interviews.

The book's ambitious structure echoes Isabel Wilkerson's The Warmth of Other Suns: Adams takes readers through the different eras of the Black bookstore, showing its evolution over the last seven decades (plus a slavery-era prequel). Thus the characters work not just as individuals but as emblems of their time.

In the Black power era of the late 1960s, for example, when shops often doubled as activist centers, Martin Sostre envisioned his Afro-Asian Bookshop in Buffalo, New York as a training ground for "freedom fighters." Entrepreneur Clara Villarosa, by contrast, embodies the 1980s so vividly you can almost see the power suits and shoulder pads. She opened Denver's Hue-Man Experience after hitting the glass ceiling in corporate banking, and came armed with a business and marketing plan.

Adams tactfully negotiates the tradeoffs each generation made. The 1980s brought an "upward mobility" that arguably sacrificed some of the earlier militancy. Black bookshops flourished as the whole "Black book ecosystem" boomed: a burst of small presses and distributors, mainstream attention to Black authors, and even a growing presence in the American Booksellers Association, organizing not just amongst themselves but with a larger national alliance.

The industry built on this success in the 1990s, the "golden age of bookselling," exemplified by Oprah Winfrey's book club. Books anointed on Oprah's talk show saw a stratospheric sales explosion that one author likened to "winning the lottery."

But even as Black bookshops thrived, so did their competitors. Chain stores (remember Waldenbooks?) lured business away from independents, offering impossible-to-match discounts and colluding with major publishers. Meanwhile, a little-known internet bookseller named Amazon came onto the scene, luring customers out of physical stores altogether.

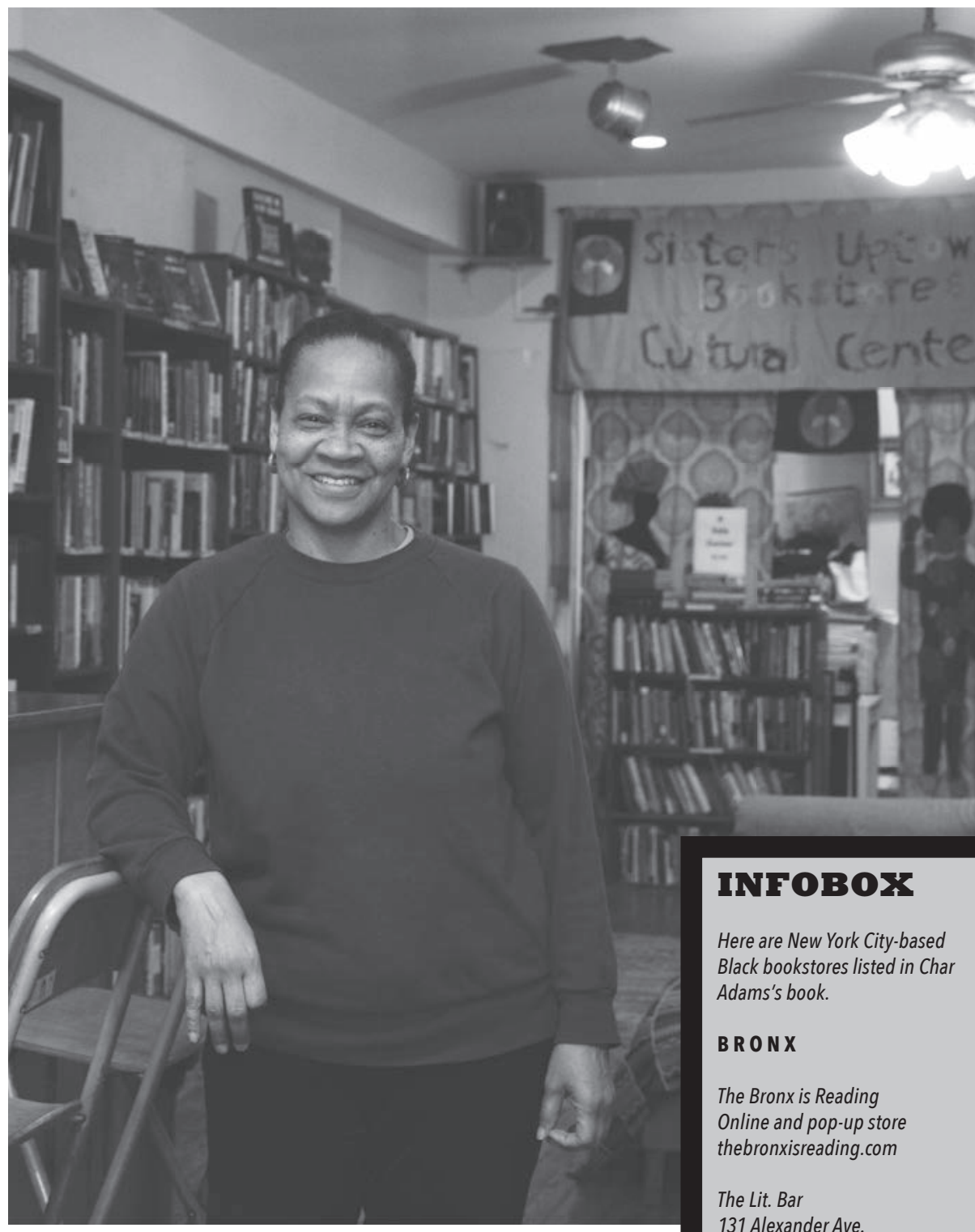
So 21st century Black booksellers require exceptional innovation in order to survive. This contemporary generation brings activism and business together in a way that skirts the debates of their predecessors; to them, the work is all of a piece. As Black Lives Matter pushed America to grapple with its racial injustice, Black booksellers provided the needed reading material, even pivoting to mail-order during Covid. As haters tried to ban books, the storefronts served as safe havens.

Indeed, looked at another way, this book is a biography, not of a single person but of a movement, or at the very least a movement strategy: the Black bookstore. As Adams puts it, "Black-owned bookstores have reclaimed their place not simply as a part of Black culture but as a centerpiece of Black resistance."

As such, this book raises larger questions of movement sustainability: How do we keep a dream alive over the decades if not centuries? How do we stay true to our vision while also adapting to our times and continuing to evolve? Where do we compromise? What do we prioritize?

Along these lines, Adams "purposefully" doesn't define "Black bookstore." She uses it to mean a store that is both Black-owned and "specializes in books by and about Black people"; ideally, it checks both boxes. However, she deliberately uses "Black" and "Black-owned" interchangeably. She honors that many booksellers must decide what to sell given what will sell – again, compromising aspects of the vision in exchange for keeping the vision alive.

The future of the Black bookstore might look different than what we're used to. It might be a temporary popup, or a bookmobile passing through, or a lending library displaying its wares on a stoop, or even a purely digital space. But the resilience and passion displayed in this history all but assure the existence of this future, whatever its form.



CHASE KIHN

COMMUNITY INSTITUTION: *Nicole Reed, a volunteer at Sister's Uptown Bookstore, welcomes visitors to the venue which was founded in 2000.*

INFOBOX

Here are New York City-based Black bookstores listed in Char Adams's book.

BRONX

The Bronx is Reading
Online and pop-up store
thebronxisreading.com

The Lit. Bar
131 Alexander Ave.
thelitbar.com

BROOKLYN

Adanne Bookshop
115 Ralph Ave.
adanne.co

Liz's Book Bar
315 Smith St.
lizsbookbar.com
Taylor & Co. Books
1021 Cortelyou Road
taylorcobooks.com

MANHATTAN

Grandma's Place
84 W. 120th St.
grandmasplaceinharlem.com

The Schomburg Shop
515 Malcolm X. Blvd.
Located inside the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
schomburgshop.com

Sister's Uptown Bookstore
1942 Amsterdam Ave.
sistersuptownbookstore.com

THE PING-PONG GAME OF LIFE

Marty Supreme
Directed by Josh Safdie
Central Pictures, Dec. 2025, 150 min.

By Michael Kanyongolo

"Marty Supreme" is the ping pong — ahem, table tennis — thriller you never knew you needed.

If "Uncut Gems" was the Safdie brothers' cortisol-fueled high-speed chase across the mind of a gambling addict, "Marty Supreme" is Josh Safdie's breakneck rollercoaster ride, tearing through the scrappy streets of the 1950s competitive table tennis scene as Marty scrambles to make enough cash to repay everyone he has used to get this far.

Timothee Chalamet perfects the trope of a pimple-faced young upstart with something to prove as Marty Mauser, in an already award-winning performance. Loosely based on the real-life ping pong hustler Marty Reisman, Marty Mauser is audacious, arrogant, and shameless. He speaks in a mile-a-minute line delivery and a relentless stream of sardonic wit that somehow manages to simultaneously charm and annoy everyone around him. Like Chalamet, Marty is unashamed about his ambition. He wants to become one of the greats, knows he has what it takes, and doesn't shy away from broadcasting it to the world.

Starring alongside Chalamet is Odessa A'zion as Rachel Mizler, who may be the only other character who sees Marty as he sees himself: his schemes are her inspiration, his lies are nothing but necessary, and together they drive each other deeper into treachery and manipulation. Her pleading demeanor, laced with its own brand of deceit, heightens the stakes and compels you to believe every lie is sincere, even against your better judgment.

The stunt casting in this film is also effective, especially with "Shark Tank's" billionaire Kevin O' Leary, aka Mr. Wonderful, who essentially plays himself. (Not hard to pretend to be a rich asshole when that's just who you are.) Even so, his smug, self-satisfied portrayal of pen magnate Milton Rockwell is an entertaining contrast to Marty's scrappy skeeviness, and serves to embody the establishment that Marty can't quite break into, and the success he longs for.

Tyler, The Creator is featured as Wally, Marty's fellow table tennis hustler. While distracting at first, the animated character suits him, and his immediate familiarity makes him a fitting choice for Marty's longstanding partner in crime.

Gwyneth Paltrow is another recognizable face, making her return to the silver screen after seven years with a solemn portrayal of Kay Stone, a wealthy 1930s actress married to Milton Rockwell, a trophy wife with her golden days behind her. While hers isn't a standout performance, it does feel wholly genuine, and reinforces the intoxicating bravado of Marty Mauser as we see his unyielding dynamism through her eyes.

Stone's character (and more so, her husband's fortune) also demonstrates to the audience Marty's obsession with making money, which can be encapsulated in one line: "I live with the confidence that if I believe in myself, the money will follow." Unfortunately for him, it does not. Money is the one thing he needs, and his efforts to get it send him tumbling down a hole of leveraged debts, each absurd turn in the narrative a result of his many misguided efforts.

The subsequent chaos of his money-making schemes is best encapsulated in a standout sequence where Marty checks into a hotel while on the run from the cops (par for the course for him), takes a shower after being told not to, causing the bathtub to crash through the floor, which crushes the arm of the tenant below, and injures the tenant's dog. Good Samaritan Marty offers to take the dog to the vet, in exchange for a hefty sum, of course. Marty loses the dog, keeps the money, and attempts to scam the owner out of the subsequent reward money for his lost dog, only for the scam to fail until Rachel picks it right back up and lands both of them in even more trouble.

This is the torturous joy of "Marty Supreme." Every scene is another balancing act on Marty's house of cards, and it's uniquely satisfying to see the house tumble and crash, only for Marty to rebuild it with tinier, flimsier cards.

All in the name of table tennis. Every dollar in service of the final game, a match between Marty and his rival, Endo.

Endo, played by first-time actor Koto Kawaguchi (a genuine pro table tennis player), is not a large presence in the film. He looms in the background as Marty's ultimate challenge after besting him in a championship match. He is deaf, barely speaks, and acts as a humble contrast to Marty, who can't seem to shut up.

Rather than being a fleshed-out antagonist, Endo is more like a representation of collectivism, a culture where one uplifts the whole, instead of Marty's world, where you step on others to get to the top.

The most impressive aspect of "Marty Supreme" isn't that it entertains for two and a half hours straight. It's that it manages to do that and have it all amount to something much more than the sum of its parts.

Marty's exploits are continuously contrasted with acts of selflessness from characters surrounding him, like Béla Kletzki, a fellow player and holocaust survivor, whom he has lunch with in the first act. Marty uses Kletzki as a distraction to impress Milton as he eyes his wife, Stone, from across the hotel restaurant. Interestingly, though, the film doesn't focus on Milton or Marty, instead depicting Kletzki's story in its entirety. Through flashbacks, we see him incarcerated in a concentration camp, forced to search for and disarm bombs in the surrounding area. One day, he comes across a beehive and painstakingly, Kletzki decides to smoke the bees out, cover himself in honey, and smuggle it back into the camp, where his fellow prisoners lick it off his body for sustenance.

It is a shocking, disturbingly beautiful sequence of altruism, one that Marty uses to further his own egocentric goals. Scenes like this build Marty up as a brash microcosm of American independence, while Endo and Kletzki serve as his opposite, humble symbols of collectivism.

It's fitting that in Marty's bootstrap-pulling, every-man-for-himself world, there is no fame or success granted to him. He doesn't win against Endo in the championship match; he doesn't even make it to the championship. His only victory is a selfish, personal one in a sponsored game with no real stakes, organized by Rockwell's company to build goodwill with Japanese customers.

"Marty Supreme" shows us that to live only for yourself is to live a half-life, to fake your way through reality, always in search of something more. But to live for other people, even just one, is to truly live. This is the lesson Marty finally confronts in the final moments of the film, and one you can learn for yourself in just 150 minutes.

MINNEAPOLIS STREETS

Continued from page 16

few blocks down the street.

It is surreal to see such unmitigated attacks by federal agents on humans happening on the streets that I know so well.

Yet, we've also seen Minneapolis showing up so amazingly in defense of each other.

It is so clear that what Trump's ICE is doing in Minnesota is not moral, just, or legal. One judge recently called their actions "bereft of humanity". Anyone with a heart open enough to let the truth in can see this.

Minneapolis is standing up for all progressive communities across the nation that believe in protecting their neighbors. For the past decade — ever since Trump rode down the golden escalator — we've been watching Trump and his Republican MAGA movement tear down the structures of decency that we thought our country was based upon. We've marched, and we've voted — to some effect, but not enough — to protect the goodness we thought our country was about, that we hope our country can be about: welcoming, based on the pursuit of justice, valuing the inherent dignity of each person. Many of us in Blue America welcome opening the circle wide.

THE LEGACY OF THE GEORGE FLOYD PROTESTS

When Trump began his second term by actively tearing down the ties that bind us, many of us were ready to lean in to protect not just our individual friends and family and neighbors, but also the larger us.

In Minneapolis, we've been here before. In late May 2020, in the aftermath of the police murder of George Floyd, blocks — especially those near Lake Street and other main corridors that were most impacted by the civil unrest — got connected. We used new communication platforms and met almost every day to share news about what we were seeing and hearing on the street. We established patrol watches through the night to make sure our bodies, our homes, and our neighborhood businesses remained intact. Those very connections that were established in the wake of George Floyd's murder are the foundation of what we see in Minneapolis today.

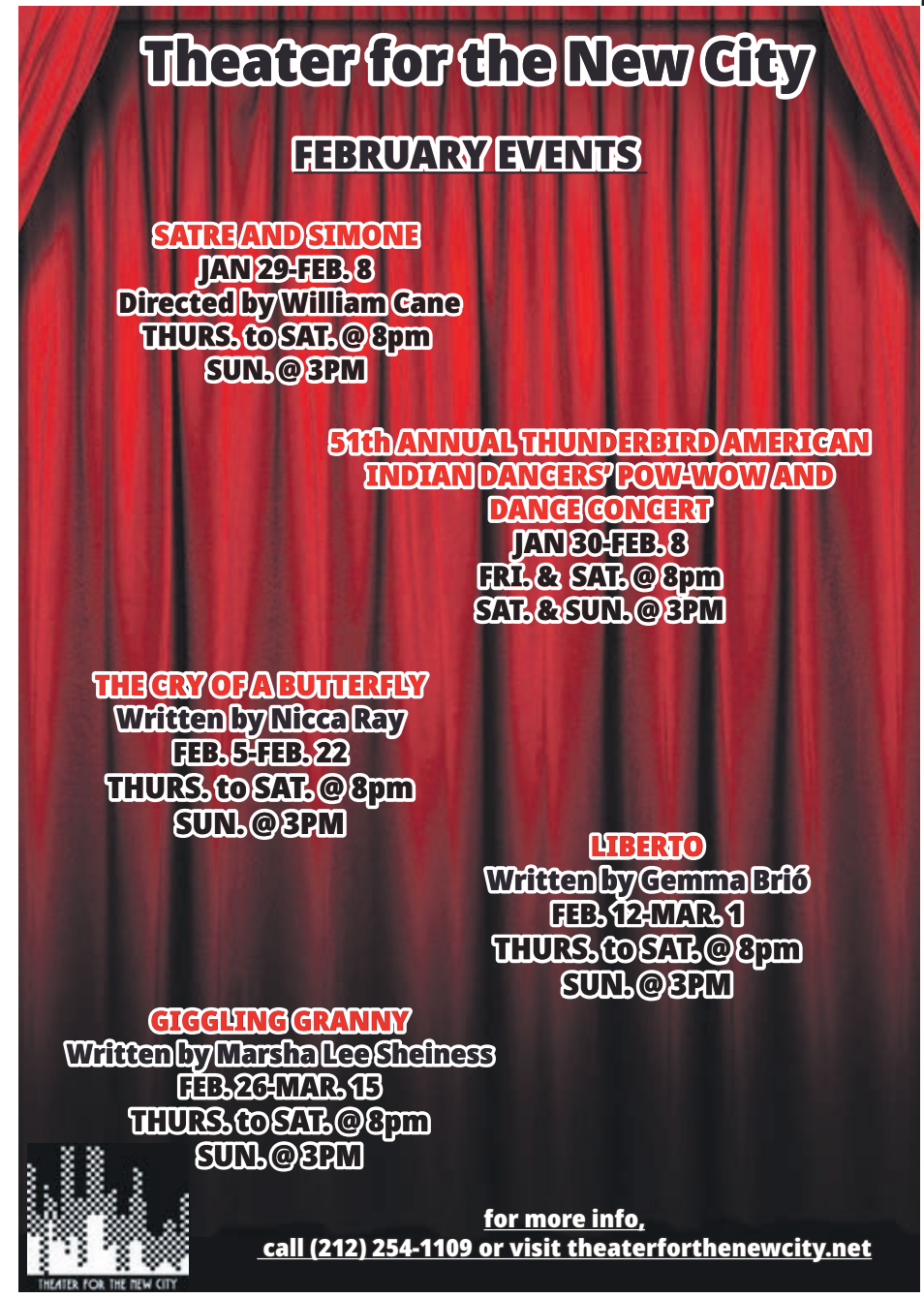
Now, the networks established in those chaotic days in the aftermath of George Floyd's death have expanded, as has our charge. Yet the work is still the same. Then, we stood in defense of each other block by block. Today, we are standing in defense of what Adam Serwer calls "neighborism": "a commitment to protecting the people around you no matter who they are or where they come from."

ICE supporters might think we are just protesting ICE and Donald Trump. Instead, Minneapolitans are standing in defense of the America we want to be: the America, as Langston Hughes wrote, that never has been yet. We believe that the idea of America is still worth fighting for.

On January 24, two Border Patrol agents shot and killed a second community observer, Alex Pretti, at point-blank range while he was pinned to the ground. Trump changed the on-site leadership of Operation Metro Surge, which has vowed to be less confrontational.. But it doesn't look like that on the ground. Agents are still picking up law-abiding residents who have a legal right to be in this country. Friends continue to have their neighbors nabbed, cars are still abandoned on the streets after ICE agents pull the drivers out, and neighborhood patrollers are still patrolling, especially in sensitive areas around schools and places of worship, and another month's rent is due for numerous families who haven't had an income for two months.

ICE out now.

Cara Letofsky is a longtime Minneapolis resident and author of "Field Notes from America", a Substack page where she writes about her observations on the American Experiment through the lens of economic inequality, systemic racism, and history. For more, see caraletofsky.substack.com.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THURS. to SAT. @ 8pm
SUN. @ 3PM
LIBERTO
Written by Gemma Brió
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CALENDAR

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FEBRUARY / MARCH

WEEKLY WED FEB 11 ONWARDS • 5PM • FREE
HOOKS, NEEDLES, YARN AND THREAD: A FIBER ARTS CRAFT CIRCLE
Learn how to sew, knit, crochet, embroider and loom with a group of fiber art enthusiasts. Bring something to mend, a vision for a project of your own, or just come learn from experts.
COMMUNITY ROOM, 67TH STREET LIBRARY
MNHTN

WEEKLY SUN • 1PM • $44 OR PAY WHAT YOU CAN
DHRUPAD SINGING, SOUND HEALING CLASSES BY MAMA INDIA
Dhrupad is an ancient Indian practice which teaches us how to heal ourselves by using our own voice. Part singing class, part meditation, the sessions induce peace, harmony and balance from within. Joyful, transformative and fun, Mama India has trained in this sacred art form for decades and leads her students into a powerful practice. Come sing, enter the oasis of your heart. Bring your kids! No singing or meditation experience necessary.
BARZAKH CAFE
147 Utica Ave
BKLN

SAT FEB 14 • 7PM • FREE
"CRUSHING ON A COMRADE" VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY
Mingle with like-minded comrades at this queer, lefty fundraiser for Palestine. Flirty games, Valentine's grams, trivia, a photo booth and of course beer. All proceeds donated to Go Project Hope, a Palestinian family-run organization focused on healthcare and education. And maybe Cupid's arrow will find you!
PURGATORY
675 Central Ave
BKLN

TUE FEB 17 • 11AM–3PM • FREE
LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL
Celebrate the coming of Year of the Fire Horse at the annual ceremony in Chinatown. The traditional firecracker ceremony drives away bad luck and welcomes prosperity. There will be vibrant dragon dances, folk performances and martial art demonstrations. Build up an appetite and then venture into neighborhood restaurants for auspicious offerings.
SARA D. ROOSEVELT PARK
CHRYSTIE ST & FORSYTH ST
MNHTN

FRI FEB 20 • 6PM–8PM • FREE
DOWNTOWN WINTER ART NIGHT
Gallery hop with friends or solo, enjoy a warm beverage at Canal Projects and stay for a late night viewing of Jakkai Siributr's "There's no Place". Through striking embroidered textile sculptures, Sirbutr tells the story of his family's history, Thailand's history and reveals the struggles of high society "privileged" women, revealing that suffering doesn't discriminate.
CANAL PROJECTS
351 CANAL ST

SUN FEB 22 • 7PM • FREE
COMEDY SHOW FUNDRAISER
Joy is resistance. Gather the troops, join New York City DSA for their Tax the Rich fundraiser, hear some humorous political hot takes. Comedians OrangeFreddyG, Anders J. Lee, and Sharif Hasan host the show. The funds will help bring Zohran Mamdani's campaign promises to life.
LIFEWORLD
563 Johnson Ave
BKLN

SUN FEB 26 • 7PM • $15 OR $7 (REDUCED PRICE)
BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL: THE KWAME BRATHWAITE STORY
In the 1950's, Kwame Brathwaite did the radical work of documenting Black communities in their joy and in their beauty. Known to be the soul of the Black is Beautiful Movement, he photographed both 'regular' folks and stars including Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye and Nina Simone. His son, Kwame S. uncovered his fathers photos and forgotten legacy and made this documentary, where everyone from Beyonce to Rihanna speak about discovering and championing his work. A post-screening discussion moderated by Dr. Monica Miller featuring Kwame S. Brathwaite Jr. and Dr. Tanisha S. Ford will follow.
MAYSLES DOCUMENTARY CENTER
343 Malcolm X Blvd
MNHTN

WED MAR 4 • 7PM • FREE
PANEL: HOW BAD BUNNY BECAME THE GLOBAL VOICE OF PUERTO RICAN RESISTANCE
Bad Bunny is more than a chart topping artist, he's a movement. When he took the stage at this year's Super Bowl, it felt like more than a half-time show. Vanessa Díaz and Petra Rivera-Rideau created the Bad Bunny Syllabus analysing Bad Bunny's music, rise and political performance as a lens through which to better understand how popular culture can tell the story of long-standing injustice. Join Julyssa Lopez, deputy editor for Rolling Stone with Diaz and Rivera-Rideau for an illuminating discussion about Bad Bunny, Puerto Rican history, and the power of music to boldly speak back to the empire.
CENTER FOR BROOKLYN HISTORY
128 Pierrepont St
BKLN

WED MAR 17 • 6PM–8PM • FREE
'AGAINST INNOCENCE': MIRIAM TICKTIN IN CONVERSATION WITH RUTH WILSON GILMORE
How do we define who is innocent? For Ticktin, how we answer that question shapes why, how and for whom we should care with devastating consequences for those who are excluded. The discourse around innocence sounds innocent on the surface but upon a closer look, does more harm than good, disenfranchising targeted groups of people. Expand your mind, tickle your intellect.
9100: SKYLIGHT ROOM
CUNY GRADUATE CENTER
365 5th Ave
MNHTN

(WEEKLY) TUE THROUGH MAR 17 • 6:30PM–8:30PM • FREE
NIGHT CLASS: HISTORY OF U.S. REBELLIONS
Stories have power. To better understand ourselves, we must understand our history. Those in power have wanted us to forget the true history of our country. The People's Forum is doing the essential work of teaching the people the history of oppression and rebellion. Upcoming sessions feature the railroad strike of 1877, the 1917 Green Corn Rebellion, GI resistance during the Vietnam War and women's prison rebellions before bringing it back to the resistance movements we see today. Get off TikTok, touch some grass and come learn in person!
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM
320 West 37th St
MNHTN

FRI–SAT MAR 20–21 • 8PM–11:59PM • $28
THE 9TH ANNUAL BROOKLYN JUG & STRING BAND RENDEZVOUS
Jug and String band music is characterized by a bluesy, jazzy sound, featuring homemade instruments like jugs and washboards alongside banjos and kazoos. Upbeat, fun and designed to make you dance, the genre found new life in the 1960s. Over the course of two days you'll hear many bands play including The Jug Band, the Hokum, and Old Time Sounds. Put on your suspenders, and go dance.
JALOPY THEATRE
315 Columbia St
BKLN

SAT MARCH 28 FREE
NO KINGS DAY PROTEST
With a flagship event in Minneapolis, millions of Americans will take to the streets in many hundreds of cities and towns across the country for the fourth mass mobilization since the Trump regime took power last year. New York City times and locations haven't been announced yet. For updates, see nokings.org.

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL: *Sikolo Brathwaite photographed by her husband Kwame Brathwaite who documented Black communities in their joy and their beauty and played a key role in launching the Black Is Beautiful movement of the 1960s and 70s. A movie about his life will play at Maysles Documentary Center at 7 pm on February 26.*